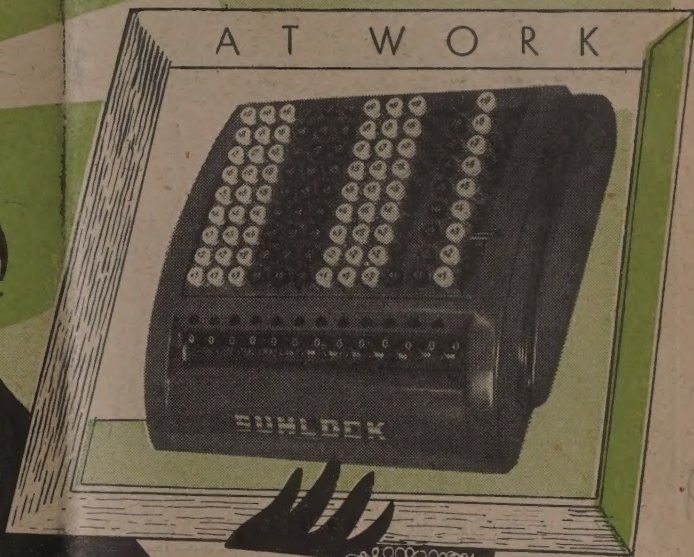
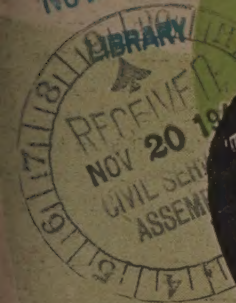


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Local Govt. Service

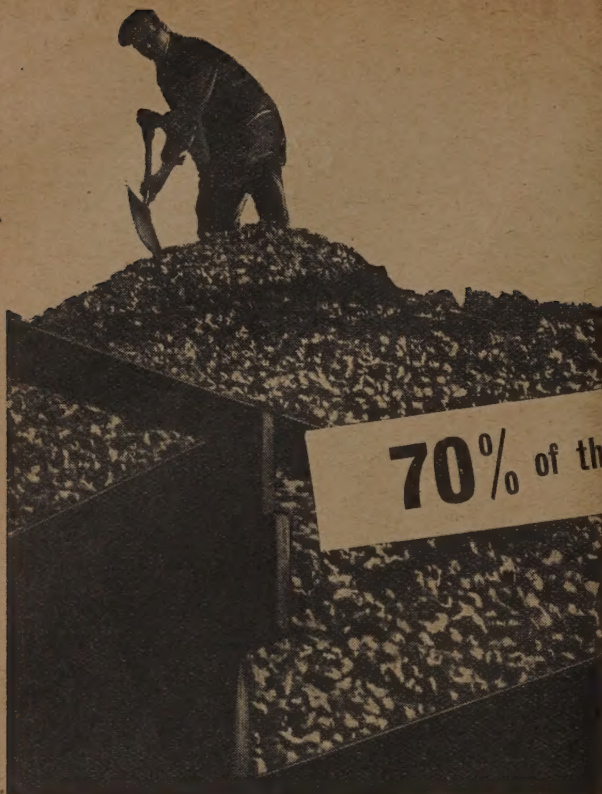
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GOOD DESIGN



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Local Government Service

JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS
NO. 11. VOL. XXIV NOVEMBER 1946 THREEPENCE

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Curtis Report Points Way to Better Child Care

By W. PITT-STEELE, Secretary, Aldersbrook Children's Homes, East Ham.

HE report of the Curtis Committee on the care of children has drawn a fine toothbrush through service and all who read it are impressed by the magnitude of the task and the care and ability with which the committee has completed it. Not unnaturally, the Press has seized upon, and public opinion is gravely disquieted by, the report's more vivid revelations. Local government officers, and especially those intimately involved, will have no wish to minimise the serious conditions disclosed—such as the mixing of sick children, mentally defective children, imbeciles, and normal children in out-of-date institutions. These things are appalling. They could never have been. At the same time, it would have been fairer had the Press mentioned also that the Committee had seen and commended much that was good as well as criticised much that was bad—and that the officers concerned have themselves recently called for many of the reforms now suggested. In 1943, impatient of delay, those controlling the residential children's services, through the National Association of Administrators of Local Government Establishments, a report on the deprived child, which was widely circulated. It is gratifying that the Curtis Committee, after inviting them to be its first witnesses, has closely followed the pattern of their report and adopted their proposals.

Staff Training Needed

The picture of the children's homes service, with local authority and voluntary, presented in the report is a mixed one, bright and dull in turn; of staff failing to make the best of available facilities and of staff rising above satisfactory conditions and environment. Local authorities come out of it better than Acts they administer. The report describes the language of the Poor Laws as "betraying antiquity of some of the enactments of which it is an amalgam" and add that it reflects a spirit which we are glad to say is not characteristic of the administration of the local authorities, though it may well have been a long time on progress. Generally, the report refutes suggestions of treatment or harsh usage of children. On the other hand, it criticises the lack of personal interest in the child's emotional life, the unsuitability and drabness of many buildings, the insufficient care in placing children in employment, and the lack of trained staff for facilities for training them. A comprehensive training scheme for those engaged in child care is urged. The report does a great service in drawing attention to the number of mentally defective, epileptic, and epileptic children housed both in

institutions and children's homes owing to the appalling lack of accommodation in the appropriate establishments. But this is only half the story. Every education welfare officer could give harrowing details of the sufferings of parents having to cope with hopelessly defective children in their own homes. Such parents, driven to the verge of breakdown, regard it as a stroke of good fortune if, possibly by subterfuge, one of these children can be slipped into the institution or children's homes. But this is far from good fortune for the institution, already at its wits' end for staff and with no provision for children it never expected to have and never should have. Once they are admitted, the home must keep them—and run the risk of public opprobrium for doing so. There must be some conversion of buildings to house these poor children. This matter is urgent.

The recommendation that Children's Reception Centres should be set up in every county and county borough area (or by a combination of authorities) should in time lead to a happier allocation of children and prevent the abuses which have caused so much concern. One of the difficulties of the poor law authority has been its statutory obligation to relieve destitution at once. It is never given time to study application forms, or to consider whether it has the necessary facilities; it is unable to refuse admission if it lacks those facilities; and it cannot ask the applicant to wait until there is a vacancy. "Admit at once, at any hour of the day or night" is the order. A separate reception unit will do much to ensure a happy reception for the newly admitted child and, subsequently, a far better classification.

A New "Children's Officer"

In its proposals for dealing with the "deprived child," the report follows the general lines of present practice—i.e. first adoption, but with more safeguards; second, boarding out, but with a much more energetic policy to find suitable homes; and, third, institutional care in children's homes entirely detached from adult institutions. The latter are to comprise either group cottage homes or scattered homes with a strictly limited number of children in each—eight is regarded as the ideal, but 12 would be permissible.

It is encouraging to find that the Committee rejected the suggestion that the service should be a state service. It urges the grant of full powers to local authorities and recommends that they should set up a single *ad hoc* committee to deal with adoption, children's homes, boarding out, child life protection, and the keeping of records of all deprived children, including children in voluntary homes.

This committee is to have a children's

officer, with high qualifications in child care, whose appointment must be approved by the central department and who will be given executive rank. It will be a big job. Education welfare officers who know how much time can be taken up by one child committed to their care by magistrates will be able to visualise the amount of work involved in a big county borough, with hundreds of children covered by the new regulations. Moreover, the new officers, whilst exercising adequate supervision, will need to be careful not to undermine the immediate influence nor stifle the initiative of the administrator and staff of the residential institutions to which many of the children will be sent, and will need to co-operate fully with all other departments.

Pay and Status Must Be Improved

I would have liked to have seen a greater insistence in the report on the need for better conditions for those who work in children's homes. For, after all the inspections, reports and advice, somebody must put Tommy in the bath, and Mary on the chamber; must rub down and dry the clothes of the boys who loiter in the rain and splash in every puddle on the way from school; must get up at night when Johnny has a pain; must, on a hot and dusty day, take them all to the zoo, the fair, or the picnic, and, on getting them home (without losing one), must cook their supper, top and tail them, see them safely in bed, and be ready to get up when the sleep-walker sets off for the fair again; must spend her Sundays and her Christmas Day tending babies; must entertain the old boy or girl and make them feel they are the only ones who matter; must go to camp under canvas in an English summer—and must stick it, year after year. Women like this—and there are many of them—might have been given a status and been as uplifted by the report as their charges will be. They are offered training, which they will accept—but for their conditions of service only the present negotiating machinery is suggested. That machinery has just functioned under the Mowbray Committee. It has given them 1s. 7d. an hour, with 1s. 5½d. for assistants, and time-and-a-half on Sundays—3d. and 1½d. above the minimum rate for the lowest grade of worker. Compare this with the Munster Report, under which the house mother of an approved school can go to £400 a year, with far better holidays and conditions.

The publicity accorded to the Curtis report has given a stigma to this important work, and staff are fearful of entering it. If they are to be found, it must be built up in the public mind, and proper salaries, conditions, and status given to it.

LET LOCAL GOVERNMENT GIVE

What can the local authority do to raise the standard of public taste? A great deal! Were every "designable" component in every home, school, library, and council building to be of the highest standard design and in the best taste, the citizen would be enriched by mere contact and his own choice thereby influenced for good.

By Councillor BRIAN BARKER

Chief Press Officer "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition, and Member of Sunbury-on-Thames Urban District Council

THE longest queue in Britain is the one outside the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington. Day by day more than 20,000 people pass through the turnstiles into the "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition. They are of all ages and come from all parts of the country.

Designers, architects, and artists have created in this Exhibition a brilliant and colourful setting for the new products of British industry, but most of the visitors see more than a colourful spectacle. Their eyes are fixed on the goods displayed—new pottery, glassware, kitchen equipment and, possibly above all, new furniture and equipment of the Furnished Rooms Section. For most of them the "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition is a fore-taste of the sort of homes they want for themselves when the years of scarcity are over.

Local authorities, as well as industrialists, must realise that people are keenly interested in the colour, shape, and convenience of the things they buy. The scarcities and privations of the war-time years have created a sense of discrimination. Among the parties of housewives who have passed through the Exhibition there is frequently a critical comparison of articles on show. Often they express the view that a still better designed article is wanted.

Public Taste Improving

The last quarter of a century has seen a steady rise in the general standard of living and a mounting desire for and appreciation of good design, particularly at home. The carrying out of the recommendations of the Tudor Walters Committee after the 1914-18 war created a new standard for the design and



equipment of small dwellings, and the change in public taste and outlook after the recent war has left its imprint in the reports of the many committees concerned with the design, layout, and standard of construction of the houses covered by our present building programme.

The Dudley Committee, for example, put on record in these terms the importance it attached to design in the construction of dwellings:

"Before we discuss in detail the various aspects of our terms of reference there is one matter of paramount importance which affects them all—good design. Good design implies

good layout, good internal arrangement, good equipment, and good appearance. It is a lack of design that has produced so much dreariness and monotonous development in the past. Our evidence shows a widespread, if rarely articulated, dissatisfaction with this state of affairs and an innate desire for well-ordered and pleasant surroundings."

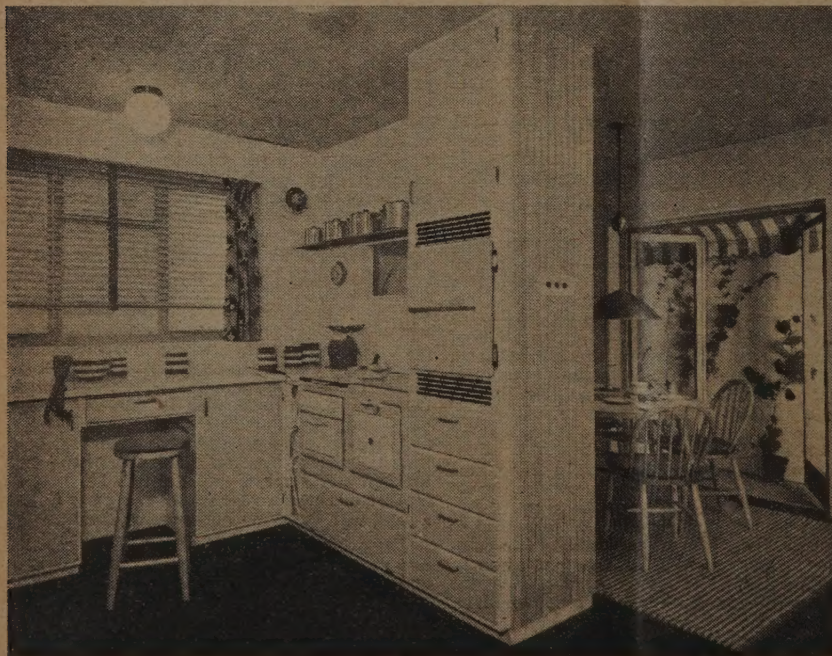
The immense housing programme now being carried out by the local authorities provides the opportunity not merely for housing in which the design has been carefully considered in relation to the appearance, layout, and the internal arrangement of the floor space, but in which an equal degree of attention has been given to the equipment, fittings, and decoration.

Much attention has been given to the design of kitchen equipment for the prefabricated house. We should give equally close attention to the design of kitchen equipment in the more permanent house. Sinks, draining-board, plate-racks, and cupboards should all be carefully selected on the basis of suitability to their purpose and general attractiveness of appearance.

The Authority's Opportunity

Local authorities, by the attention they give to the design factor for the equipment of municipal houses, can do a great deal to raise the standard of public taste and make a useful contribution to the comfort and convenience of millions.

There are many other spheres, too, in which local authorities can exercise a tasteful influence. The dilapidations of the war years and the requirements of the new Education Act have imposed an immense forward programme on the education services. The



★
DESIGN THE WORKING-LIVING ROOM—This is a corner of the combined kitchen-dining-room of a small house. The kitchen has everything to hand, with oven, refrigerator, cupboards, preparation table, sink, clock and an built in.

THE PEOPLE

GOOD DESIGN

building new schools and of re-equipping ones gives an opportunity to bring light, convenience, comfort, and colour into the lives of a new generation of children.

The development of the technique of furniture manufacture by the use of laminated woods and light alloys opens up new possibilities in the design of school furniture. The architect, photographer, and layout artist must have a great deal to say to the education authorities on the design of school text-books fitting not merely the eyesight of the pupils but even the pace of educational progress. If the designer of the school-room at the "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition is to be credited, there is much to be said for retaining the traditional school blackboard.

C. Gives a Lead

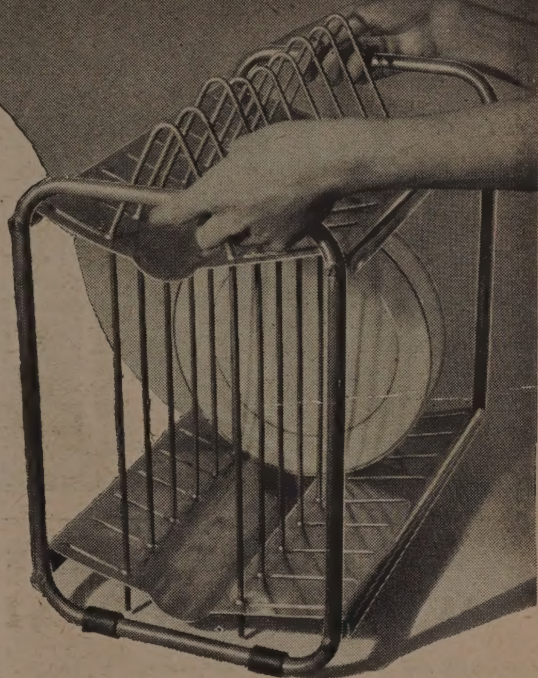
The seats in our parks, the tables, crockery, cutlery, tablecloths, and curtains for the principal restaurants, the lighting standards in our streets, and the beds for our hospitals—these are a few of the many items of local government expenditure in which design is a vital element. In these fields, as in many others, local authorities have the power to do a great deal to ensure that the design standards of the articles they use are not only adequate but the best.

The Council of Industrial Design was set up by the Government in December 1944 to promote improvements in the design of the products of British industry.

Its main task is to establish, in co-operation with the industries concerned, Design Centres to deal with the problems of design in relation to the products of a particular industry. But it also has other functions. It has organised the "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition. It advises the Government departments on the design of Government purchases. With the Ministry of Works, for example, it is taking part in discussions on the design of furnishings

★

DESIGN THE PLATE-RACK—The kitchen needs good design as much as the lounge. This aluminium plate-rack is made by Shipton & Co., to the design of H. A. Nieboer.



and equipment of Government offices. The Ministry of Health has invited it to take part in the work of the domestic equipment sub-committee, and it is, in collaboration with the Ministry, considering the standards of design of school furniture and equipment.

Early this year the Council approached the London County Council with the proposal that it should appoint an authoritative design advisory committee under the chairmanship of its chief supplies officer to deal with the design of household, institutional, and office furnishings and equipment purchased by it. This proposal was accepted and the committee has now been set up.

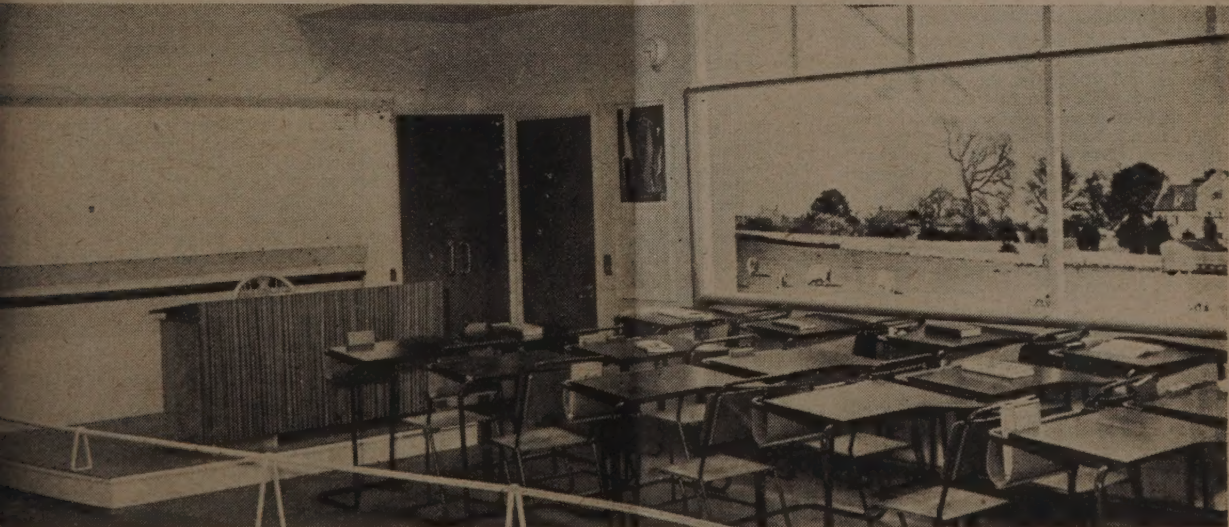
Design Committees Wanted

There is no doubt that other local authorities will be interested in the establishment of design committees. The functions and composition of these committees will largely depend upon the diverse requirements and circumstances of the authorities concerned. In some instances, design committees might be appointed as sub-committees to the housing, hospital, or education committee, being mainly concerned with purchases of their respective committees. In other cases, the committee would have the power to review the whole range of purchases of the authority concerned. The composition of the design committees themselves will also vary according to their scope and the local

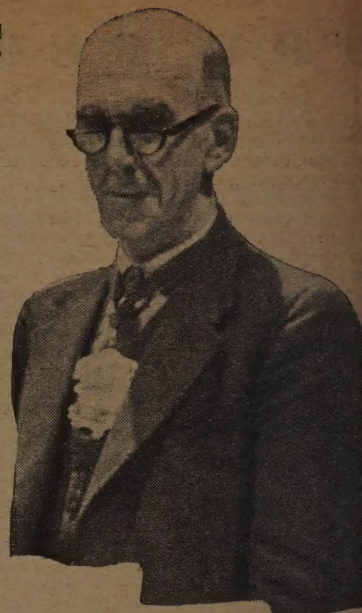
circumstances. In some instances they may be composed mainly of council members and officers, such as the architect, clerk of the works, and the chief education officer. In others, they may call upon the co-opted services of the directors of the local technical and art schools.

These tentative suggestions indicate the contribution which our system of local government can make to the improvement of industrial design in Britain. Local authorities made an immense achievement in cleaning up the morass of squalid housing and appalling social conditions which were the first-fruits of the industrial revolution. The second phase of the industrial revolution may be to ensure that the techniques of mass production are used to produce goods planned and made with skill and imagination to meet the users' real needs and to give pleasure and satisfaction in the using. In this, local authorities can once again exercise their decisive influence.

DESIGN THE SCHOOL-ROOM—This secondary school-room by D. Clarke-Hall has: bent-plywood and steel furniture, which can be stacked in rows when a clear floor is wanted; a flood-lit, multi-coloured "black-board" on which blue ink is used; an attractive outlook; wide, warmed floors; and gay-coloured paintwork.



"Where we shall keep fresh the memory of the Dead
in the happiness of the Living."



THE PRESIDENT OPENS NALGO'S WAR MEMORIAL HOME

In simple and moving words, spoken to a gathering representative of every area of Britain and every district of NALGO, the President, D. J. PARRY, formally opened on October 5 the Association's National War Memorial, Knole Lodge Convalescent Home, Bournemouth.

"AS we stand here today," said Mr. Parry, "our thoughts turn to those terrible years when our country was engaged in a struggle which was to affect the destiny of every one of us; a struggle to determine whether our future should be one of freedom or slavery. For six years, in the poignant words of John Bright, 'The angel of death was abroad throughout our land.' We heard the beating of his wings. He took his victims from the castle of the noble, the mansion of the wealthy, and the cottage of the poor and lowly. No profession or occupation was spared and his victims included more than 2,000 of our colleagues, in whose memory we are to dedicate this building.

"They Have Not Returned"

"With many thousands of our colleagues, they left our shores to fight over land and sea, in the air, and under the sea, and they have not returned. They lie in the sands of the desert, in swamps and jungles, and in the bed of the ocean. They served, fought, and suffered in every arm of the services and went to the four corners of the earth. They fought in nearly every country in Europe. They endured the heat of the deserts of Africa, the noisome and terrible privations of the swamps of Asia, and the cold and ice of the Arctic, so that we might live a full life in freedom.

"Nor was it only in the fighting line that they gave their lives. We mourn, and proudly acknowledge today also, the sacrifice of 83 civilian members of our Association, many of them actively serving in Civil Defence, who died in the air raids on this country.

"We think, too, of those, numbering close on 1,000, who received awards for gallant and heroic deeds, both in the fighting line and on the Home Front. Of our 40,000 members who served in the Forces, nearly 750 were awarded decorations of one kind or another.

We are proud to count among our colleagues men who distinguished themselves in every field of wartime activity; such men as Squadron-Leader R. A. M. Palmer, who left the borough treasurer's department at Gravesend to win the Victoria Cross, with what has been officially described as 'a record of prolonged and heroic endeavour beyond praise'; T. M. Alderson, of Bridlington, the first civilian in Britain to be awarded the George Cross; Group Capt. 'Johnny' Johnson, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, of Chigwell, who has been described as 'the greatest fighter pilot of the war'; five other holders of the George Cross; 49 holders of the Military Cross; 149 of the Distinguished Flying Cross; 11 D.S.O.s; 14 D.S.C.s; 78 D.F.M.s; 32 M.M.s; and many more, too numerous to mention. Nor shall we forget the great anonymous host who, though they were not singled out for award or commendation, did their duty with no less courage and devotion.

"We all know what war is. War is ugliness; war is death and destruction; war is pillage; war is sorrow and devastation, heartbreak and separation, and altogether hateful.

"No Finer Memorial"

"But there is another side to war. We know that, in war, many found the only Christian brotherhood they ever knew. We cannot forget that, in war, we found complete unselfishness. War showed us that a man could love his fellow men more than himself. In war, we saw men who loved life give their lives for us. Why is it that this spirit, which possessed us in war, is lost in peace? As one writer put it, 'It is insane that war should bring out our best qualities and peace our worst.'

"Our colleagues went forth to plant seed that it may one day bring forth increase, and more than 2,000 of them have themselves become the seed. We, who have been spared, must see to it that their sacrifice shall never be forgotten. We must cultivate and tend this seed to bear fruit in abundance, and it is fitting that we should have selected, as our own memorial to them, this splendid building, in which we hope many members of our Association will be restored from sickness to health. They fought and died that we might live. They

would, I am confident, ask no finer memorial than this, a house in which we shall keep the memory of the dead in the greater happiness of the living. I am equally confident every NALGO member will cheerfully tribute his share—so small a share beside the great sacrifice of those it commemorates the cost of buying and equipping this building and of maintaining it in perpetuity, so that and those who come after us, may enjoy benefits and, in our enjoyment, remember those whose achievements inspired it.

"I deem it a privilege and an honour to declare this Memorial Convalescent Home open. May the valiant spirit of Christian fellowship and unselfishness of those it commemorates inspire and sustain us all and those who will serve within its walls."

Bournemouth's Pride

The Mayor of Bournemouth, Council R. M. Old, expressed the feelings of all present when he said how stirred and touched he had been by the President's tribute—the beautiful he had ever heard—to the fallen. He could not think of a more fitting memorial than the building the Association had acquired. Bournemouth was proud and happy that the Association had selected it as the site for a memorial, and he was confident that NALGO members in the town would regard Knole Lodge as a treasured and sacred place and would offer every friendship to all who were sent there for rest and recuperation. He joined with them in praying that it might prove a place of spiritual and physical recreation.

There followed the simple dedication, pronounced by Dr. John Short, Chaplain to the Mayor:

"To the glory of God and in the merit and service of our fellows, we dedicate this National War Memorial of the National Association of Local Government Officers."

"Almighty and Eternal God, without us nothing is strong and nothing holy, grant the share of Thy Presence as we dedicate this Memorial to the honour and glory of Thy Name.

"Hear our prayer that this house may be a comfort and a blessing to all who enter. May the sick renew their health and the weary renew their strength and liberally find their peace of God, that passes all understanding."

"So may Thy Spirit abide, forever, in this place, and may its purpose increasingly be fulfilled in the Glory of Thy Name."

N.E.C. Backs "100 Per Cent Union Shop"— 199

With Free Choice of Union

THE recent controversy over the "closed shop" was considered by the National Executive Council when it met at Bournemouth on October 5. The Council unanimously approved the following statement of NALGO's policy:

The passing of the Trade Disputes and Trades Union Act, 1946, restores the position which prevailed before 1927 when a local authority could, as in the case of an ordinary employer, require an employee to be not to be a member of a trade union as a condition of his employment. This, coupled with the recent agreement between the London Transport Board and the Transport General Workers' Union that certain classes of employees must be members of the union, has created a position which makes it desirable for the Association to indicate its attitude to the closed shop.

The term "closed shop" is not always used in the same sense. Sometimes it means an agreement requiring all employees to be members of a prescribed union. At other times it means that trade union membership is required, the employee remaining free to decide which organisation he shall join.

Some local authorities have decided that every employee shall be a member of a trade union. This does not affect officers who are already members of NALGO. Such decisions are not inconsistent with the recent pronouncements of the National Joint Councils for England and Scotland, which are:

For England and Wales—"The National Joint Council . . . is a joint organisation of employers and employed and constitutes the recognised machinery for the application of collective bargaining in the local government service. Negotiations between individual local authorities and unorganised officers are inadvisable. The National Council recommends local authorities to recognise all the organisations represented thereon. On both sides the National Council agrees that the interests of local authorities and their staffs are best served by individual officers joining their appropriate organisations, it being understood that the organisation he joins is a matter of the unfettered judgment of the individual officer."

For Scotland—"That the Joint Industrial Council, having in view the fundamental principle that such bodies should be constituted on the basis of negotiations of employers and employed, that negotiations which cover the local government service as a whole are only possible on this basis, wish to direct the attention of both local authorities and their staffs to this fact, to recommend that they should indicate their approval of membership of such associations and should support association with an appropriate organisation."

The Association considers that every local government officer should be a member of NALGO. The activities of the Association have benefited, directly or indirectly, every local government officer. It is fair that, while all benefit, any should gain out of membership.

The Association, which is a trade union, has been established since 1905 and is a representative organisation of officers of local authorities and public utility undertakings. It has a membership of over 140,000.

The Association is not affiliated to the T.U.C., but it is represented upon the N.E.C. National Advisory Committee for Local Government Service, which consists of eight NALGO members (including two

officers in an advisory capacity) and 14 members appointed by seven trade unions affiliated to the T.U.C.

7 The development of collective bargaining on a national basis has created a new position and made one hundred per cent organisation more necessary and urgent. The Association would welcome any action by

T.U.C. Upholds NALGO Policy

THE statement of policy on the "closed shop" adopted by the T.U.C. at Brighton on October 22 follows the line adopted by NALGO. It says:

"The 'closed shop' in the sense of an establishment in which only members of a particular union can be employed to the exclusion of members of other unions is alien to British trade union practice and theory.

"Congress has never consented to the recognition of an exclusive right to organise by one union where other unions have built up their organisation side by side . . .

"The position of the non-unionist cannot be justified on the grounds of principle or of expediency . . . Neither the General Council nor Congress can admit the claim that a workman ought to be free to join a union or not as he pleases."

In his presidential address to the T.U.C., Mr. Charles Dukes declared that it was "logically indefensible" for a local authority to disown responsibilities about the trade union status of workers in its service: it was its duty to see that workers joined their appropriate union. The problem arising out of the existence of "organisations outside the affiliations of Congress"—an obvious reference to NALGO—could, he believed, be "solved without a head-on collision."

Congress rejected a motion by Mr. Bryn Roberts, N.U.P.E., calling on the General Council to consider the establishment of one comprehensive national joint council for the whole local government service, but agreed that the General Council should examine the position of NALGO on the T.U.C. Local Government Advisory Committee.

local authorities or public utility undertakings that is consistent with the pronouncements of the National Joint Councils. The Association will resist by every means at its disposal any action by a local authority which is inconsistent with those pronouncements.

Extending the Charter

Proposals for extending and improving the Charter considered and approved by the N.E.C. included:

Chief Officers' Salaries.—NALGO has always taken the view that the National Whitley Council should determine the salaries and conditions of service of all local government officers. At present, clerks to local authorities and most chief officers—i.e. all officers with a basic salary exceeding £700 a year—are excluded from its purview. Many chief officers are themselves opposed to allowing the Council, in its present form, to determine their salaries, on the ground that the staff side includes officers in subordinate positions, and it is possible that some at least of the associations of local authorities might support this view. To overcome the difficulty, the N.E.C., while maintaining its contention that the National Council should cater for all, is prepared to agree that chief officers' salaries should be negotiated by an internal panel, or a series of such panels, of the National Council, composed of representatives drawn from both sides of the Council together with specially appointed representatives of the classes of officers concerned. Salaries and conditions negotiated by these panels would

be subject to the approval of the full National Whitley Council.

Holidays.—The N.E.C. shares the general dissatisfaction of members with the charter scale of annual holidays, and decided to ask the staffs' side of the National Whitley Council to press for its improvement.

New Scale for Women.—In addition, the Council decided to support an amendment of the Charter to provide for the inclusion of women in the Miscellaneous Division, which is at present confined to men only.

Whitley Council Representatives.—The N.E.C. appointed Miss M. ANDERSON, and Messrs. L. BEVAN, F. H. HARROD, P. H. HARROLD, E. L. RILEY, E. A. S. YOUNG, J. H. WARREN (general secretary) and J. E. N. DAVIS (chief organisation officer) to be the Association's representatives on the National Council for 1947.

Other matters decided by, or reported to, the N.E.C. included:

Scottish Charter.—While welcoming the successful negotiation of the Scottish Charter (which was given in full in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE last month) the Council directed that every effort should now be made to bring its provisions into line with those of the English Charter.

Public Health Officers.—A report of the salary increases recommended by the Rushcliffe Committee for certain public health officers was welcomed.

Medical Laboratory Technicians.—It was reported that a meeting of representatives of the Institute of Medical Laboratory Technology, the Association of Scientific Workers, the Confederation of Health Services, N.U.P.E., and NALGO had agreed that medical laboratory technicians employed by local authorities should be covered by the Charter.

Reinstatement of C.O.s.—NALGO is in future to assist conscientious objectors who were members of the Association at the time of their suspension or dismissal in applications to their authorities for reinstatement, provided that they carried out the directions of their tribunals.

Pensions for Widows.—At the request of Conference, the N.E.C. has been considering a number of schemes to provide a pension for the widow or widower of a member, irrespective of the date of the member's death or retirement. In view, however, of the high rate of contribution involved, the employee's liability for social insurance payments, and the power already held by many local authorities to award annuities based on gratuities not exceeding two years' pay, it was decided to defer further consideration.

General and Municipal Elections.—The chairman and vice-chairman of the law and parliamentary committee will discuss with the Home Office ways and means of ensuring that local government officers engaged on election duties are able to vote at parliamentary and municipal elections.

Jobs for P.A. Officers.—The Ministers of Health and National Insurance are to be asked what action should be taken by public assistance staffs wishing to apply for vacancies in the Ministry of National Insurance.

Public Accountants Bill.—Two associations, the I.M.T.A. and the A.L.G.F.O., will be invited to form a joint committee with NALGO to co-ordinate efforts to safeguard the interests of financial officers to local authorities liable to be affected by the Public Accountants Bill.

NALGO Posters.—To assist the recruiting campaign and to help inform members generally of the many services provided by the Association, Headquarters is to prepare a series of posters which will be made available to branches.

"Citizen."—The N.E.C. is to be represented (by N. W. Bingham, vice-chairman of the public relations committee, J. H. Warren, general secretary, and A. Spoor, public relations officer) on the editorial board of "Citizen," the new independent local government periodical.

Bureau of Current Affairs.—The public relations and education committees have established close contact with the Bureau of Current Affairs, and NALGO will assist the Bureau in preparing maps, charts, exhibitions, pamphlets, discussion handbooks, and other informative material about local government. The Bureau is prepared to conduct, for members, short courses and weekend schools on chairmanship and the leading of discussion groups.

Local Authority P.R.O.s.—It was reported that 18 local authorities had now appointed full-time

official public relations officers, eight others had set up public relations committees of the council, and a further eight had joint public relations committees of council and staff. In addition, many local authorities have supported or co-operated in branch public relations activities.

Civics in the Factory.—The public relations department at Headquarters has arranged a course on civics, alternating lectures with visits to fire stations, clinics, hospitals, etc., for young employees of the National Cash Register Company (who are devoting two hours a week, during working hours, to the study of "home affairs"). It is hoped to extend this enterprise.

Scholarships in Administration.—Particulars of scholarships to encourage students to take degrees or diplomas in public administration are being sent to branches. Because of lack of support for the scheme, and the provisions now made by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and local authorities, the NALGO scholarships for nurses are to be abandoned.

Grants to Universities.—In recognition of their assistance to local government officers, the Association is to make grants of £25 to the London School of Economics and of £50 to the Joint University Council for Social Service and Public Administration and to each University or University College conducting courses for degrees or diplomas in public administration in 1946-7.

NALGO Testimonial Fund.—The "open" prize will not in future be provided from this fund, but awards will be made to the best D.P.A. students at each University or University College.

Summer Schools.—Two summer schools will be held next year in England and one in Scotland. The possibility of arranging one or more summer schools overseas in 1948 is to be examined.

Convalescent Home Charges.—Members of the Benevolent Fund and their dependents staying at "Knole Lodge," Bournemouth, and "NALGO House," Matlock, will in future have to pay four guineas a week instead of three guineas—but the Fund will consider applications

from branches for reduced terms for members in need.

Christmas Gifts.—The Benevolent Fund is to spend £650 this Christmas on gifts to beneficiaries—£200 more than last year. Persons living alone will get 30s.; families of two or three, 35s.; and families of four or more, 40s.

Family Allowances.—The N.E.C. agreed that grants to beneficiaries who are also receiving the new family allowances should be reduced by the amount of the allowances received. It was pointed out that to disregard family allowances would cause many anomalies: for example, a widow with one child would get no family allowance, whereas a widow with two children, one of whom had just begun work, would do so. The only fair procedure, it was considered, was to take all income into account in assessing the amount of a Benevolent Fund grant. At the same time, the Benevolent Fund Committee is to review its scale of allowances, with the object of raising the general standard, particularly where there are dependent children.

Resignation.—J. YOUNG, D.P.A., has resigned from the N.E.C. with effect from the end of this month on leaving Kent and taking up an appointment in the clerk's department, Lancashire county council. Mr. Young's resignation after three years on the N.E.C. creates a vacancy in the South Eastern district. He was also one of the Association's representatives on the National Whitley Council and the T.U.C. Advisory Committee on Local Government.

E. A. S. Young, chairman of the council, presided, and these presents included: E. L. Riley (vice-chairman), R. Adams, Miss M. Anderson, E. F. Bacon, F. Bainbridge, W. R. Beevers, G. T. Belton, L. Bevan, N. W. Bingham, H. Blizard, E. M. Bourne, A. Bowker, S. H. Brodie, J. Brown, P. H. Brown, A. Clark, F. C. Corbishley, Miss E. Dawson, W. O. Dodd, J. W. Edmonds, R. Evans, R. L. Evans, J. Y. Fawcett, P. H. Harrold, R. E. Heron, J. W. John, H. R. Jones, H. Joyce, G. Llewellyn, S. Lord, G. C. Martin, T. W. Maslen, E. H. Mason, J. W. Moss, T. Nolan, A. E. Norrop, A. E. Odell, A. Denton Ogdin, D. J. Parry, J. Penny, J. Pepper, G. W. Phillips, W. Pitt-Steele, J. H. Robinson, W. Rowlands, H. Russell, L. C. St. Leger-Yeend, R. T. Shears, W. Strother, L. H. Taylor, J. S. Underwood, W. E. Veasey and J. Young.

CITIZEN



"CITIZEN"—the new monthly journal of civic affairs—has made its bow. First-sighters have reported that its stage, the book-stall, becomes it well, that it profits by comparison with its motley companions—the literature of humour, fashion, and fiction—and that it will find an appreciative audience amongst laymen and experts alike.

"Citizen" not only appeals—it surprises. It is, so far as we know, the first local government periodical to bring colour to its pictures, and certainly no other employs such lavish illustration. "Citizen" considers local government to be dramatic, alive, and of everyday significance to us all, and what is more, presents its message in that way.

The intention with which it was planned is

described by its editor in a letter circulated by NALGO to all branches: "The appointment of public relations officers, the production of exhibitions, documentary films and brochures, and the activities of public libraries are notable examples of action by local authorities to foster a better understanding of civic affairs. These measures have, however, been limited in the extent, or in the duration, of their influence, and no attempt has been made on a national scale to take into the homes of the public a regular source of information. A periodical journal, attractive enough to claim a widespread interest, consistent in its quality and authoritative enough to command respect and confidence, would seem to meet this need."

The first number contains a feature on Regionalism, by Dr. W. A. Robson, and the first articles in four series:

Civic Survey—dealing with a different town each month, and starting with Manchester;

Local Government Explained—by W. E. Jackson, L.B.;

Local Government Abroad, by Miss E. Mayer, B.A.;

A Citizen's Diary,—by H. Norton—"Jackass" to readers of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

Other pages are devoted to correspondence, parliamentary news, and women's interests.

NALGO is represented on the editorial advisory board of "Citizen."

Paper restrictions will keep supplies far below the demand, and members should therefore order at once through W. H. Smith & Son, or from the publishers, Walter King Ltd., 11, Bolt Court, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. (Price 1s. 6d.—or 18s. a year post free.)

NALGO AND E.P.E.A.

Agreement Reaffirmed and Amplified

THE decision of NALGO to recruit officers of company-owned electric undertakings has raised afresh the relationship between the Association and the Electrical Power Engineers' Association, which caters for the technical staffs engaged in generation, distribution, and utilisation of electricity in both municipal and company undertakings.

Since 1928, cordial relations have been maintained between the two associations, the basis of an understanding reached at that NALGO recognised the salary schedule of the (Electricity Supply) National Joint Board for Technical Staff, as applicable to such staffs and would leave entirely to E.P.E.A. any negotiations with regard to other salaries and conditions of service. This position was more clearly defined in 1932 when the two associations issued an agreement statement declaring, *inter alia*:

"Both associations realise the importance of avoiding friction and of securing observance of the terms of joint recommendations of employment and staff such as those of the National Joint Board. Local branches of NALGO in salary negotiations upon which they may be engaged will, unless otherwise agreed between the two associations, always clearly indicate definite exclusion of the technical staff of electricity department from such negotiations."

In 1942, the Council of the E.P.E.A. adopted the following resolution:

"That this Council agrees to the suggestion of NALGO that a member of that organisation in joining the E.P.E.A. be only required to give an undertaking in writing to the effect that E.P.E.A. would be responsible for conducting all negotiations relative to his salary and conditions of service."

Now, as a result of recent negotiations, has been agreed to reaffirm and amplify the arrangements in the following terms:

Professional and technical staffs not eligible to join the E.P.E.A.—that is, those not covered by the Agreement of the National Joint Board—free to join NALGO unconditionally.

A member of the technical engineering staff of an authorised undertaker as such in the electricity supply industry shall not be admitted to membership of NALGO unless he is a member of E.P.E.A.

LOGOMIA REDUCES LIFE PREMIUM RATES

The Board of Logomia, meeting in London on October 3, decided to allow a reduction of 1s. per cent per annum on published rates for new life and endowment assurances of £1,000 and over. The reduction does not apply to "Hedge your Mortgage" assurances, or similar endowments.

Big increases in business for the nine months ended September 30 were reported. Comparison with the corresponding period in 1945, new assurances increased by 131 per cent—from 2,693 to 6,932, and new fire and burglary insurance by 223 per cent—from 808 to 2,609. Demand advances under the motor hire purchase scheme is also increasing, despite the shortage of new cars.

PROVIDENT SOCIETY PROGRESS

In the seven months to September 1, NALGO Provident Society received 326 applications to join the sickness scheme, 388 to the hospital and nursing home scheme, and 2 to increase contributions. A membership drive has begun, and the Society hopes that each branch will recruit at least three new members before the end of the year. A circular explaining the continued need for the Society under new national health and insurance services has been sent to local correspondents.

Of the 1,530 local authorities in England and Wales, 1,218—or 80 per cent—had, by October 10, adopted the National Whitley Council Charter of salaries and service conditions.

In fact, the proportion is higher than this, because of the 312 authorities which have not yet adopted the Charter, many are known to be in general agreement and likely to do so soon, while others are small, employing no full-time officers and are therefore not affected.

At its meeting on October 5, the National Executive Council decided to take immediate action to secure the application of the Charter to the remainder by:

Writing to each authority concerned, pointing out that the Charter now constitutes "recognised terms and conditions of employment" within the meaning of the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Orders, and is thus binding upon all local authorities; and

Declaring a trade dispute, in appropriate cases, with local authorities which persist in their refusal to adopt the Charter.

In addition, the N.E.C. strongly deprecated any deviation from the scheme. Where this happened, it will ask the appropriate district committee to consult with the branch concerned, if necessary report the deviation to the provincial council, and in any event submit its observations to Headquarters.

The monthly rate of progress since the Charter was approved in February is shown in the diagram.

The total of 1,218 adoptions is made up as follows:

53 out of 62 county councils,
23 " " 29 metropolitan boroughs,
77 " " 83 county boroughs,
252 " " 309 non-county boroughs,
436 " " 572 urban districts, and
377 " " 475 rural districts.
1,218 1,530

A district survey shows the highest percentage of adoptions to be in the South East with 96 per cent. The first provincial council to claim 100 per cent adoption amongst its authorities is the Middlesex provincial council.

District figures are:

	per cent.		per cent.
South Eastern ..	96	Eastern ..	83
West Midland ..	86	East Midland ..	80
Metropolitan ..	85	North Western ..	75
North Eastern ..	85	South Western ..	74
Yorkshire ..	84	South Wales ..	56
Southern ..	83		

West Sussex and Worcestershire counties both show 100 per cent adoptions. Within each of this goal are Bedfordshire, Surrey, Kent, and Essex, all with well over 90 per cent. Additions to the list published last month are:

COUNTY COUNCILS
Devonshire, Somerset.

COUNTY BOROUGHES
Birmingham, Canterbury, Dudley.

NON-COUNTY BOROUGHES

Accrington, Chesterfield, Daventry, Deves, Droitwich, East Retford, Kidwelly, Mansfield, Marlborough, Rowley Regis, Shaftesbury.

URBAN DISTRICTS

Addington, Alfreton, Alnwick, Amble, Ammanford, Amphill, Ashington, Baildon, Barmouth, Barnoldswick, Barrowford, Bedlington, Bedwellty, Berkhamsted, Bettws-y-Coed, Billinge & Winstanley, Bingley, Blaydon, Bletchley, Bolsover, Brandon & Byshottles, Bredbury & Romiley, Bromyard, Bungay, Bushey, Carnforth, Caterham & Warlingham, Cheadle & Gatley, Chorleywood, Coalville, Connah's Quay, Coseley, Cowes, Crediton, Cricketh, Cromer, Darfield, Desborough, Grange-over-Sands, Hebburn, Hetton-le-Hole, Holywell, Hoole.

Ilkley, Irthlingborough, Letchworth, Littleborough, Llanrwst, Loftus, Longbenton, Longdenale, Lymm, Mablethorpe & Sutton, Market Drayton, Market Rasen, Melton Mowbray, Menai Bridge, New Hunsstanton, Newport Pagnell, North Walsham, Norton, Oakham, Orrell, Penistone, Pelsfield, Preesall, Raunds, Rawmarsh, Ripley, Ryton, Sawbridgeworth, Seaton Valley, Silsden, Skegness, Skelton & Brotton, Stocksbridge, Stone, Thame, Tottington, Wardle, Wednesfield, West Bridgford, Whaley Bridge, Whickham, Whitefield, Wigston, Wirksworth, Witham, Wolverton.

RURAL DISTRICTS

Alcester, Aled, Ashbourne, Ashby-de-la-Zouch,

Belper, Biggleswade, Border, Brackley, Bromyard, Caistor, Camnock, Ceiriog, Chesterfield, Chester-le-Street, Clown, Daventry, Dolgellay, Drayton, Droxford, East Elloe, Edeyrnion, Ennerdale, Forehoe & Henstead, Frome, Fylde, Gipping, Haltwhistle, Hiraethog, Holsworthly, Horncastle, Howden, Kettering, Kingston, Lancaster, Leek, Leominster & Wigmore, Llanfyllin, Long Ashton, Lutterworth, Lydney, Market Bosworth, Market, Harborough, Melton & Belvoir, Mere & Tisbury, Mifford & Launditch, Monmouth, Nantwich, Northleach, North Westmorland, Oundle & Thrapston, Overton, Rhayader, Richmond (Yorks), Rothbury, St. Asaph, Shifnal, Stafford, Startforth, Sunderland, Tadcaster, Tenbury, Towcester, Stokesley, Uppingham, Valley, Wellingborough, Wing, Yeovil.

OTHER AUTHORITIES.

In addition, 86 other authorities have now adopted the Charter, the latest including:

Accrington District Gas & Water Board; Burnley, Colne & Nelson Joint Transport Board; Dearne Valley Water Board; Plymouth Assessment Committee; East Morley Assessment Committee; East Suffolk Rivers Catchment Board; Isle of Ely Assessment Committee; Lancashire Joint Hospital Board; Leeds Assessment Committee; Neath & Afan Valleys Joint Planning Committee; North East Hants Joint Planning Committee; North Lincolnshire Joint Planning Committee; North Riding of Yorkshire Committee for the Care of the Mentally Defective; North West Midlands Joint Electricity Authority; Oldham Regional Planning Committee; River Blyth Port Health Authority; Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham Joint Sewerage Board; Yeovil & District Joint Planning Committee.

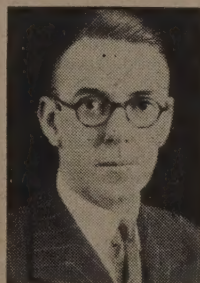
H.Q. AND DISTRICT STAFF CHANGES



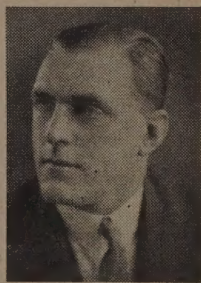
J. E. JENKINS—will succeed the Financial Officer.



P. F. GREENHALGH—to take over NALGO education work.



S. DUNCAN—Lancashire's new Public Relations Officer.



H. SLATER—new secretary L. G. Examinations Board.

NOTABLE changes in NALGO's staff were approved by the N.E.C. on October 5.

HERBERT SLATER, B.Sc. (Econ.), F.C.I.S., the Association's popular education secretary, since 1934, leaves this month to take up his new job as secretary to the recently-formed Local Government Examinations Board. He joined the staff from the West Riding C.C., in 1928 and before becoming education secretary was divisional secretary in the Metropolitan and Eastern districts. During the war he assisted in the organisation of

the North-Eastern district and acted as district officer in Scotland.

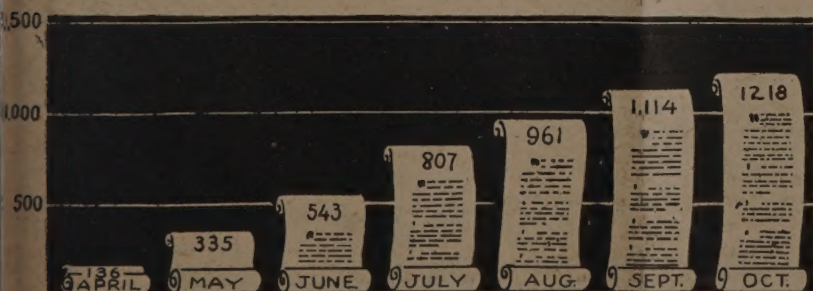
PHILIP F. GREENHALGH will take over the education department as administrative assistant, under the jurisdiction of the general secretary. Mr. Greenhalgh joined the staff in 1932, served in the Army throughout the War, becoming a senior administrative staff officer of a brigade with the rank of major, on the India-Burma frontier, and was appointed senior assistant in the education department earlier this year.

J. E. JENKINS has been appointed financial officer, in succession to Horace Baker. He joined the finance department from Lancashire C.C. in 1931 and was a senior accountancy assistant when, in 1939, he joined the R.A.F.V.R., serving in the Accountant branch and attaining the rank of Squadron-Leader.

STEPHEN DUNCAN, B.A., district officer since 1943, has left the East Midland district to become public relations officer to Lancashire C.C.

ALBERT H. GEARY, South Wales district officer, is to be promoted to the West Midland office at Birmingham, though the exact date of the change and its consequential adjustments have not yet been decided. Before going to Cardiff in 1940, Mr. Geary was assistant district officer for the East and West Midlands and South Wales districts, so knows the area well.

CHARTER ADOPTIONS—MONTH BY MONTH



Our Pumpless Parishes : Community Organisation Survey : Call for a New Nursing Inquiry

"ABOUT 30 per cent of the people in rural areas live in houses not within easy access to a water supply . . . 3,779 rural parishes . . . in England . . . without a public supply of water"—so writes W. H. MAXWELL, a recognised authority on water supplies, in *Current Waterworks Practice* (Batsford, 18s.).

We have a long way to go before we can feel satisfied with our national water system. Mr. Maxwell's book is partly technical and partly administrative. In both aspects it consists of notes on miscellaneous developments and problems of the day and is not a comprehensive treatise on water administration.

Among the technical essays, those on the effect of war experience on waterworks construction and on the exploitation of additional sources of supply—such as those underground—will be read with special interest. The book was written before the passing of the Water Act 1945, but it is referred to in an appendix. The chapter on recent developments in waterworks practice is a convenient summary, but it suffers from scrappiness; there are too many superficial historical allusions taking up space that might better have been devoted to the book's real theme.

Love Thy Neighbour !

BRITISH insularity and aloofness get some hard knocks from modern thinkers about social planning. Community centres, neighbourhood grouping, and the like, do not cut across the principle of the Englishman living in his own castle, but they do make it easier for him to make friends over the back fence. The Manchester and Salford Council of Social Service has just published the results of a survey it made last year—called *Community Centres and Associations in Manchester*—which, despite its local habitation and name, deals informatively with the broad principles of community organisation. Early Manchester housing estates earned the nickname "Siberia" because they were lonely and unsociable, and the survey records some heartening progress in overcoming that sort of thing.

Local authorities' co-operation in providing community centres is now statutorily assured; the authority will help to find better buildings, more adequate staff, more money. Better machinery, too, is wanted, but it must supplement, and not replace, the rank-and-file co-operation which is vital to true community life.

How London Libraries Kept Going

A REPORT on the *Municipal Library System of London and the Home Counties* (why won't people use snappier titles?) has been published at 2s. 6d. by the Library Association.

It tells the story of the Libraries in the first five years of war. It is a solemn, laborious document, valuable to library administrators, but failing to dramatise its fascinating subject for the rest of us. Populations fell, books were destroyed, premises were taken for other war needs, staff became ever scarcer; but stocks and services were somehow maintained. "In general . . . public libraries have survived the visit of total war with remarkable vigour." When the material for this report was collected, only a few authorities had prepared their post-war plans; no doubt this omission has now been repaired.

How to Get More Nurses

JAMES BARCLAY has written a bright and knowledgeable book telling us why we cannot get sufficient nurses—*Why No Nurses?* (Faber, 6s.). The improved conditions in hospitals are not made known widely

enough. Publicity should be directed not at the girl who has become a nurse but at the one—and her mother—who is still at school and wondering what to do in life. The democratisation of hospitals and the separation of working and leisure-time environment have both still a long way to go. There should be a new inquiry into nursing conditions to start where the "Lancet" and others have left off and deal with the problem as it stands today. This book provides a good kick-off for such an inquiry and is a very readable "must" for everyone who has to do with public health.

National Insurance

A NEW study of national insurance may seem redundant. Last year we had Hermann Levy's great survey, which to some extent covered the same ground as Beveridge's classic report. But R. W. HARRIS has brought to his *National Health Insurance in Great Britain*—prepared at the instance of the Institute of Public Administration, and published by Allen and Unwin at 12s. 6d.—some special qualities which are reflected in it. Formerly, an assistant secretary of the Ministry of Health and holder of other official positions, he played a leading role in the inauguration of the insurance services in 1911. His first-hand account of the foundations of the system (largely German), of the obstruction of the medical profession, and of the way this and other obstacles were overcome, give added interest to his appraisal of the principles of capitation

at random ——— by "hyperion"

Superstition

Personally, I rather agree with the man who was asked whether he had any superstitions. He said he only had one which he held very strongly. He absolutely refused to sleep thirteen in a bed. —Dr. Julian Huxley.

Novel Book Marks

In a bulletin issued by the Chief Librarian of Islington appear some interesting observations on the subject of book marks. To quote from these: "Many and curious are the objects used by borrowers as book marks. Spectacle cases, postcards, pins, pencils, nail files, combs, table forks, handkerchiefs, soft collars and even rashers of bacon and fish bones have been found in books by librarians. Incredible as it may sound, one London librarian recently reported that a slice of bread and jam had been used for this



purpose. In another library a reader has been known to use a five-pound note."

Thought for the Month

There are few sorrows, however poignant, in which a good income is of no avail. —Logan Pearsall Smith.

Letter to a friend

They tell me you have wed a lass
Whose native town is Boston, Mass.
Well, that is more adventurous
Than wedding one from Brighton, Suss.
—A. W. B. in Punch.

With Sympathy

He murmured, as he left the Conference table,
"How tranquil must have been the Tower of Babel!"

payment, friendly society administration, of State medicine generally—all once topics of controversial interest. The sty frigid and colourless and the material so scrappily arranged, but the book is worth reading for its author's insight into administrative problems of a kind which, though may for the moment have been solved in

Swiss Holidays Again!

Many members will recall the delights of a holiday in Switzerland organised by NALGO during the years before the war. At last we can do it again—are planning to start next year.

A NALGO Headquarters official has already inspected hotels in Switzerland and has made a selection based on his special knowledge of members' needs. An all-in, 16-day holiday—including reserved train accommodation (second-class rail, first-class boat), free admission to places of interest and free excursions and lake trips—is likely to cost between £32 and £38, and a programme should be ready in March 1947.

If you would like full details when ready, write your name and address in the margin and send it with a panel to NALGO (Special Activities), 24, Abingdon Street, London, S.W.1. (Quotations will be made required, for the coming season's Winter Sports.)

or that field of public life, are of enormous interest to public officials.

World Youth

ALL will agree with the aims of the annual *World Youth*, a 50-page shilling booklet by VINCENT OWEN, a member of the Newport (Mon) branch, who wants to improve international relations by encouraging young people to get together, and whose booklet gets a number of ways of doing it—both nationally and internationally. Some will admire his style verbose and fanciful, but all will admire his enthusiasm and intentions.

Letter from a Woman Novelist

Sh, dearie—with book !

Organised Chaos

Lieut.-General I. R. A. Eaker, Deputy Commander U.S. Army Air Forces, was told by private that he wanted very much to return to Europe.

"What on earth for? You served three or half years there," said Eaker.

"I know," said the GI, "but the chaos better organised over there."

Verse Verso

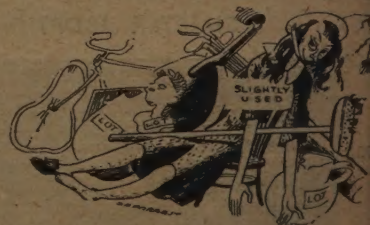
When chased in the woods by a big bull man
I always unfurl a flag of truce.

Handy Wench

Three successive advertisements in a Connecticut weekly paper, quoted by *Reader's Digest*:

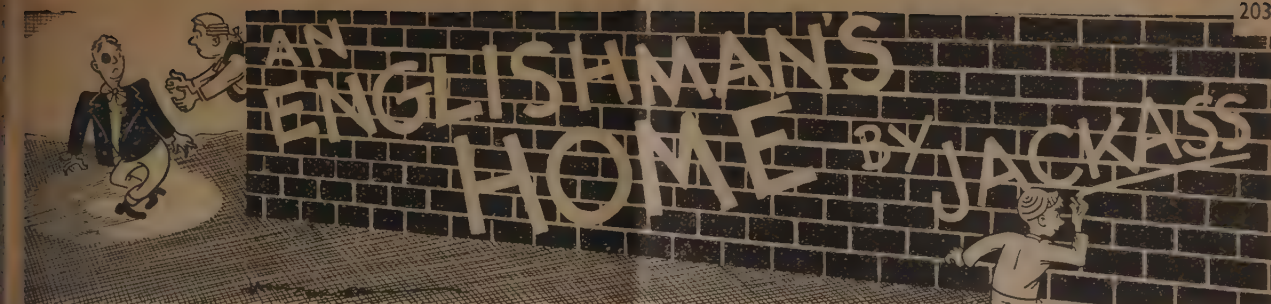
March 22.—"For sale. Slightly used wench in good condition. Very handy. Cartright."

March 29.—"Correction. Due to an unfortunate error, Mr. Cartright's ad. last week was clear. He has an excellent winch for sale. I trust this will put an end to jesters who have called Mr. Cartright and greatly bothered



housekeeper, Mrs. Hargreaves, who loves her him."

April 5.—"Notice ! My W-I-N-C-H is for sale. I put a sledgehammer to it. I am now carrying on with Mrs. Hargreaves. She met L-I-V-E-S here.—A. Cartright."



It has always been advanced as one justification for the female insistence on marriage—regarded by men as a tiresome and restrictive formality—that a woman needs “a home of her own.” The discerning bachelor soon learns that the coy, inviting glance is less a tribute to his personal charm than his value is the inevitable pip in the desirable orange. Like the turtle, he is hunted for his shell.

Houses therefore are important, and their lack a social catastrophe; nowhere is the situation worse than in Much Cowslip.

When, true to my promise to “look in” and help the Clerk with his most pressing problems, I made my way across the fields at the respectable hour of nine-thirty, as befitted a consultant, I rather looked forward to seeing the staff again—particularly Miss Legge. She and I—but why go into that?

Reaching the Council Offices, I sprang briskly up the steps, and fell headlong over a perambulator or spawn-wagon. Getting up, I saw the entrance hall swarming with squatters. A line of sacrilegious washing stretched from a balustrade of the main staircase to the statue of Sir Jocelyn Bull. A cry of “Knuckles down” drew my attention to a group of urchins playing marbles round the central circle of the mosaic floor.

Before I could collect my wits, a man too large to be ignored demanded my name and business. Menacing murmurs . . . “Coppers” mark . . . “Perishin’ rozzar” . . . “Do ‘im, Joe” . . . reinforced his questions. Bracing myself, I asked how it concerned him. It was tactical error. Five minutes later, sadly the worse for wear, I climbed through a rear window into the Clerk’s room.

He was sympathetic and apologetic. Busy with the sticking plaster, he deplored his omission to furnish me with an entry permit. Joe, he explained, was a splendid fellow but impulsive. Nobody would regret his unfortunate error more than Joe . . . he would be quite cut-up about it.

I went to look for Joe to apologise for my unintentional laceration of his finer feelings. Unfortunately, I found him. I have a clear recollection of his greeting—“Wot! Thee agean!”—and a less clear recollection of once more climbing in through the Clerk’s window. My brain cleared while he was applying a splint to my spine. “Really, John,” he was complaining pettishly, “you must learn to control your aggressive temperament. I cannot have you creating difficulties with these people. The Ministry do not like it.”

I aired my opinion of Joe. I described my action to squatters in general, but in specific rather than general terms. Then I told the Clerk his interpretation of the Minister’s policy on squatting was two months out of date. The motto now was smite and spare not.

After the Clerk had lamented that nobody had told him of such an important development I found the relevant circular (marked “Urgent and Important”) in his “inwards” tray, where it had lain undisturbed for weeks. Adroitly he shifted his ground to a diatribe against Whitehall’s vacillating policies, and sent for Blatherpatch, with whom we discussed how the unwanted guests could be evicted.

The situation was complex in that they were actually installed by invitation of the Council. The affair began by the arrival on a panting steed of Major FitzHalt FitzWalk FitzGallop, with the startling news that while he and his wife absorbed tea in the garden a “horde of dam’ hooligans” had occupied Poona Towers. The absence of curtains at the windows (the Major preferred a pre-Montgomery barracks atmosphere) had misled Joe and his Action Committee. Though quite cut up about their mistake, they had firmly refused to budge. Apparently the Major had mustered his household for assault and peppered the intruders with a shotgun after which, according to the Clerk, events moved rapidly. Knowing Joe, I was quite prepared to believe that.

Finally, the family were besieged in a cowbyre, with ample milk on the hoof, but no solid sustenance except wartime oilcake, which even cows despise. Not unnaturally, the Major called loudly and with a wealth of irrelevant detail for prompt and effective action. As a Councillor, his slightest wish was local government law.

Nevertheless, the Clerk had realised that even in Much Cowslip the new morality prevailed . . . that from him that hath shall be taken away even that which he hath if somebody hath not and wants it—provided always that the hims that hath are not numerous enough to influence the next election. He foresaw that public sympathy would be with the squatters if he ejected them forcibly; that cottagers who would have made short work of unauthorised intruders into their own humble homes would approve the invasion of Poona Towers. It was a big house, and they knew there was one law for the poor and another for the rich. The Clerk reflected that the rich were becoming fewer and poorer every day, and numbers weighed with him. He called an emergency meeting of the Council.

Councillor Gumble, whose politics have changed since the Co-op absorbed his shop and retained him as manager, objected to the Major’s description of the squatters as unprintable Communists who ought to be indescribably shot. With unintentional wit, he pleaded that because they were Left Wing was no reason why they should be left outside if they “had not where to lay their heads.” The Major had to be forcibly restrained and was understood to observe that they had every dam’ bedroom while his wife was sleeping with a cow. Postlebury, who was taking the minutes, intervened to check whether he said “cow” or “sow.”

Councillor McIsaacs prevented bloodshed by moving that the squatters be invited to occupy the entrance hall of the Council Offices at appropriate rents. Their demands for transport and hot cocoa on arrival having been conceded, the squatters agreed. For his part, the Clerk extracted half-a-crown a head money and had himself appointed as their legal adviser at a retainer of six-and-eightpence per week silver—as distinct from nickel—plus a fifth share in the cigarettes given by sympathisers.

On hearing of these financial arrangements, I feared the Clerk would reject any suggestion that efficiency could not possibly be restored

—which was my task as consultant—until the squatters had gone. It appeared however, that the first gush of gifts from supporters had dwindled to a mere trickle of Woodbines and as the Clerk’s contract as legal adviser was cast-iron and terminable only by six years’ notice, he was anxious to be rid of them.

To my surprise, Blatherpatch was also in favour. He explained that Joe was a Trotskyite, and therefore even more repulsive to other brands of Communists than the most bloated capitalist.

It was like old times to choose from Blatherpatch’s wealth of extravagant inspirations the few which held possibilities; to admire the unerring certainty with which the Clerk seized upon the best and converted it into a detailed plan; and to find myself appointed by a majority of one as the man to carry it out.

Despite my two escorts, I re-entered the hall cautiously, to be introduced as Sir Bernard Bibberly, the eminent bacteriologist. Joe was cordiality itself, laughing till his sides ached over his silly mistake.

I made a solemn inspection of the floor and walls, pausing occasionally to sniff the air dubiously. With the air of one consoling the dying I asked Joe to put out his tongue. Recoiling in partly genuine dismay, I walked back to the office shaking my head despondently. En route I paused to pat a rather ugly child on the head and murmur “Poor little mite” in a just-audible whisper.

Meanwhile, Blatherpatch had been groaning with horrid vigour in Miss Legge’s room, whence he and the Clerk subsequently emerged, carrying her still form shrouded in a sheet. One limp hand dotted with lipstick spots hung visible—an artistic touch of her own devising. The two bearers passed through and returned empty-handed, only to reappear five minutes later with another victim for disposal. Actually it was Miss Legge again, she having climbed in through a rear window.

It was time for the next step. With every eye upon me and in a solid silence, I posted a notice forbidding anyone to leave the building in view of an outbreak of “highly infectious and contagious sennapoditis.” Five seconds later the exits were jammed with fleeing squatters, Joe well in the van.

We celebrated at the “Lamb and Lion,” even Miss Legge being admitted by special dispensation. After his fourth pint Blatherpatch observed that it was one thing to get them out, but if we could get them in—to houses—that would be something.

“Don’t be absurd!” snorted the Clerk. “Houses, indeed! We could never get a permit.”

“I bet John could,” said Miss Legge in an adoring voice. Gin does strange things to women.

I looked into her eyes. When she gets them parallel they have a certain something.

“Coursh I could,” I agreed. “Hunnersh an’ hunnersh of houshesh. Sh’eashy.”

The Clerk ruminated.

“We could try,” he said. “But not now. Sufficient for the day . . .”

I misunderstood him and rose to go. He pulled me back.

“Your turn again, John,” he said.

Civics Became a "Military Operation" in the Medway Towns: County Branch's £400 Exhibition

THERE is no holding some of these NALGO exhibition organisers. Take the Medway Towns, for example. For its exhibition last month, the branch wanted photographs of the town halls of Chatham, Gillingham, and Rochester for the cover of a booklet it was preparing. Not one good picture could be found—so the organisers persuaded the Rochester municipal airport authorities to take one of them up in a Miles training plane, with a camera—and he came back with three fine air shots.

That problem overcome, another arose. Just as the booklets were nearly ready, the printer's machine-minders decided to stop working over-time. It looked as if the booklets would not be ready for the opening day. But they were. On the Saturday morning, when the printing works were shut (printers have a five-day week) the boys went along, donned aprons, and finished the job themselves.

Similar enterprise marked the exhibition itself. Some time before it opened, residents of the three towns were puzzled by invitations dropped through their letter-boxes, to "Meet Mr. Burgess at the Town Hall" on the opening day. Intrigued, many citizens went. At the top of the stairs they found, beneath bold letters, "Meet Mr. Burgess," a large mirror, in which each saw—himself!

Bang Went £400!

Then there was Worcestershire. Here, a remarkably fine exhibition of county activities, opened by the Home Secretary, was designed, built, and paid for entirely by the branch—at a cost of £400!. For the exhibition, 1,000 photographs were taken specially. The branch plans to recover the cost from the sale of a booklet. It should succeed, for I have rarely seen a finer or more lavishly-illustrated publication.

Publicity-Minded

Luton exhibition organisers, too, produced more than one sparkling brainwave. They co-opted a local newspaper editor to the exhibition executive committee; advertised by loud-speakers in big local factories; and copied the B.B.C. "stunt" of getting the "Man in the Street" to interview visitors with microphone and loud-speakers. These tactics attracted 30,000 in a week.

39,000 in a Week

Among a host of other outstanding exhibition achievements, I must mention Sunderland's 39,000 visitors in a week—breaking all records yet; and Aberdeen's 32,000 in four days (they had a constant queue, four deep, for the V.D. section).

Future Bookings

The exhibition is being shown this month at: Darlington (7-16), Weymouth (9-16), and Skel-

gas works, sewage works, and welfare institutions.

Incidentally, after the public stir created by the revelations of the Curtis report, could not local authorities invite the citizens to visit their nurseries and orphanages? If they are good—as many are—false impressions will be corrected. If they are

This Local Government!



"... workmen engaged in the collection of babies and civilian respirators ..."
Five shillings for the above extract from an official report goes to Mrs. M. PETTIGREW, of RUGBY.

bad, it is time the ratepayers knew. Local government is the business of all of us.

"The Way We Live"

At least one branch acted on the Editor's suggestion to give publicity to that fine film on the rebuilding of Plymouth, distributed on the Odeon circuit. East Barnet arranged with its local cinema for a "civic night," when it was seen by officers and 60 councillors of East Barnet and neighbouring towns.

Rehabilitation at Work

Reports of two splendid examples of educational work in the spirit of the National Whitley Council's recommendations have reached me.

In Lancashire, chief officers of the county council are to lecture throughout the autumn and winter to junior recruits to the service and staff returning from the Forces;

In the East Midlands, the provincial council is sponsoring weekly refresher courses for ex-warriors at the University Colleges at Nottingham and Leicester. Local authorities have been urged to give leave of absence with pay, to pay the fees—two or three guineas a head—and to grant meals and travelling allowances.

Establishment Officers, Note!

"Ten shillings a week," was the answer given by the East Ashford rural council chairman when asked what was the difference between a "rodent officer" and a "rodent operator."—"Evening News."

Hands Across the Sea

Fifty members of Hull branch are corresponding with members of a Dutch organisation in Rotterdam, to help maintain the traditional sympathy and understanding between the English and Dutch peoples. The scheme will, I hear, soon be extended to children on both sides.

Teaching Trainees—Are They Eligible?

Headquarters has been asked whether members granted unpaid leave of absence to train as teachers are eligible to continue as members. The answer is: Yes—on payment of a subscription according to the Association's scale where an allowance is made to the trainee by the local authority, or of sixpence a month where no such allowance is made.

Without Comment

"The Council has decided that it shall henceforth be a condition of continued employment that all employees must be members of a trade union or of the National Association of Local Government Officers..." from a metropolitan borough's notice to its employees.

More Text-Books Wanted

Students are finding great difficulty in procuring text-books for the NALGO examinations and the D.F.A. Those particularly wanted are:

Statistics and Their Application to Commerce.—BODDINGTON.
Elements of Statistics.—BOWLEY.
Local Government of the United Kingdom (latest edition) and Outlines of Central Government.—CLARKE.
Elements of Social Justice.—HOBHOUSE.
British Constitution and Principles of Local Government Law.—JENNINGS.
How to Take Minutes.—MARTIN.
Mercantile Terms and Abbreviations.—PITMAN.
Reason in Politics.—SMELLIE.
Guide to Index and Précis Writing.—WESTON AND BOOKER.

Anyone willing to lend or sell these volumes is asked to inform the education department NALGO, 24, Abingdon Street, S.W.1.

Charter Grading Appeals

I hear encouraging news of grading appeal under the Charter from the South-East. Out of eleven cases heard by the Southern Home Counties provincial council disputes committee, nine received immediate salary increases, back-dated to April 1, and ranging up to £90.

Second South Wales P.R. Campaign

The "Western Mail" and the South Wales district are performing yet another grand onslaught on electoral apathy with a series of brain trusts in boroughs before the November election. The newspaper is advertising the brains trusts, reporting them fully, and paying for the hire of halls. The district committee is helping to provide the "brains."

Congratulations to—

FRANK D. BARTON, chief clerk, Colchester, and one of the oldest members of the branch on his retirement after 30 years' service.

F. GOOCH, chief rate collector, Reading, and one-time president of the branch, on his retirement after 50 years' service.

GEORGE MELVIN, on his retirement after 26 years as town clerk of Bridlington.

OFORD A. SARGENT, Hastings, founder-member first branch secretary, one-time executive chairman, and twice president of the branch, on his retirement after 50 years' service. He joined the staff at half-a-crown a week, for which he kept the petty cash, answered the speaking-tube—telephone in those days—and "fagged" generally for the chief clerk.

SIDNEY STRATFORD, for 15 years secretary and for five years chairman of the Bristol branch, on his retirement.

WILLIAM H. TYRER, town clerk of Wigan for 30 years, and former president of the branch, on his recent retirement.

OBITUARY

We regret to report the deaths of:

ROBERT BOOTH, town clerk, Gillingham, branch president, who was a member of the South Eastern district committee and of the staff side of the Southern Home Counties provincial council since its inception.

JOHN M. FEARN, chief clerk, Wandsworth borough engineer's department, who was an active member of the staff joint committee and branch executive.

HOUSE EXCHANGE SERVICE

This month, members offer (in exchange) houses at:

CARDIFF—6-room house for similar house within ten miles of SALISBURY.—Williams, 84, Exeter Street, Salisbury.

CARLUKE (Lanarkshire)—det., 4-room, bungalow with kit., for semi-det. villa in HALIFAX area.—Haycock, c/o Park Drive, Rochdale Road, Halifax.

EPSOM—39, semi-det., 3 bed., house, three miles from station, for house or bungalow in TUNBRIDGE WELLS area.—Rees, 1, Beulah Road, Tunbridge Wells.

HENDON.—Freshold, 3 bed., semi-det. house with garage, for freshhold bungalow near TAUNTON.—NALGO, 5, Meadow Drive, London, N.W.4.

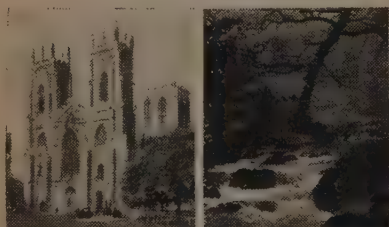
HOUNSLOW.—Mod., semi-det., 3-bed., 2-rec. house with garage space, for similar house in WATFORD area.—83, Ellender Road, Hounslow, Middx.

MANCHESTER.—Small rented 3-bed. house, three miles from city centre, for rented house in BRIGHTON or EASTBOURNE areas.—Footo, 385, Princess Road, Manchester, 14.

SHEFFIELD.—Central, mod., 5-room, S.C., flat, for similar flat, bungalow, or house in STAFFORD.—28a, Wostenholme Road, Sheffield, 7.

TAUNTON.—Mod., 4-bed., house with garage, for house within ten miles of WARWICK.—Crossley "Marteau," Osborne Grove, Taunton.

B. and O. Fund Christmas Cards



"YORK MINSTER" and "WITH FEET OF SILVER"—two of the Benevolent Fund's Christmas greeting cards now on sale.

mersdale (23-30). January bookings are: Lincoln and Preston (4), and Croydon (25).

Civic Bus Tours

Civic weeks, too, are becoming news, and I hear of two in prospect, at Paddington and Kensington.

For the latest, at Dewsbury, they had the novel idea of running special buses each afternoon to take ratepayers on a tour of the highways depot,

Even With The Bonus Our Salaries Are Too Low!

PRIZE-WINNING LETTER for this month comes from FRANK NEWMAN, executive member of West Ham branch. Is the present cost of living bonus adequate? he asks. On what is it based? How does the local government officer's pay compare with that of those outside the Service? These questions are becoming topical, since, in February, the staff side of the national Whitley Council will be free to press for a revision of the bonus.

THE cost-of-living bonus has long been a source of contention in NALGO. It is based indirectly on the Ministry of Labour cost-of-living index figure. But many experts consider that that index is itself grossly inaccurate and fails to show the real increase in living costs.

This inaccuracy may be seen by comparing it, for example, with the so-called "Treasury Index," deduced from the White Paper on National Income and Expenditure (Cmd. 6623, 1945) by the statistician, J. L. Nicholson, and published in the Bulletin of the Oxford Institute of Statistics of October, 1945. Taking the 1938 price level as 100, the two indices show price increases throughout the war as follows:

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
Treasury Index	102	120	136	147	152	154
Min. of Labour	101	118	128	128	128	129

The Ministry of Labour Index is admittedly limited in scope. It is intended to show only the average increase in the cost of maintaining unchanged the standard of living prevailing among working-class families prior to August 1914, allowance being made for any changes in the standard of living since that date, or for economies or readjustments in consumption and expenditure since the outbreak of war.

This is entirely inapplicable to ordinary expenditure today. The Index is based on the assumption that 60 per cent of the average family income is spent on food, 16 per cent on rent, 12 per cent on clothes, 8 per cent on fuel and light, and only 4 per cent on all other items (see diagram). This may have been true of working-class households in 1904 when the information was gathered upon which the Index is based. But between then and 1938 more and more of the family income was spent on the "other items"—such as cars, tobacco and cigarettes, and newspapers, which are included in the Index, and as a result the steadily rising standards of living generally, still more went on insurances, holidays, entertainment, books, and so on items which are not included in the Index at all.

The Ministry of Labour itself, recognising that its existing Index had diverged too far from reality, reviewed it in 1937-38, but the con-

clusions of the Review, later published in the Ministry of Labour Gazette, December 1940, and January and February 1941, were upset by the 1939-45 war and never replaced the existing Index. The Review's findings are shown in the same diagram.

More appropriate evidence from our point of view was provided by the Inquiry undertaken in 1938-39 by the Civil Service Statistical and Research Bureau from budgets collected from civil servants, NALGO members, and teachers. This showed that salary earners spent, on the average, not 60 per cent but 24 per cent of their incomes on food, and not 4 but 48 per cent of their incomes on "other items."

But the 14 staple foods which alone are accounted in preparing the Ministry of Labour Index are either subsidised or price-controlled and, in consequence, their prices have not increased substantially since 1939.

On the other hand, the prices of the disregarded foods—such as jam, fruit, cake, biscuits, canned goods, cereals, and all vegetables save potatoes—have increased fairly substantially, while prices of other items which form nearly 50 per cent of the "civil service" index have increased very substantially. The result, even allowing for the fact that rationing and shortages have reduced consumption, is that the Ministry Index entirely fails to reflect the real increase in the salary-earner's cost-of-living.

What that real increase amounts to nobody can say precisely. But we all know that it is a good deal more than the 30 per cent since 1939 shown by the Ministry Index.

For most local government officers, moreover, the present bonus does not meet even the 30 per cent increase in living costs shown by the Index: it is less than 30 per cent for all who have basic salaries exceeding £200 a year, and is only 10 per cent for the man on £600.

Looking at the problem from another angle, how does the local government officer's basic salary, under the Charter, compare with the salaries secured by other unions for men and

women of comparable educational standards and upbringing?

The White Paper on National Income and Expenditure, 1946 (Command Paper 6784) shows that the national income increased between 1938 and 1945 by 84 per cent—from £4,610 millions to £8,483 millions. In the same period wages increased by 63 per cent—from £1,735 millions to £2,840 millions.

It is, unfortunately, impossible to produce any reliable figures showing the comparable increase in the salaries of local government officers, since there were no generally accepted national or provincial standards before the war. A study of pre-war provincial council recommendations suggests, however, that the average maximum salary for a man in what is now described as the general division was about £220 in the provinces and about £275 in London. Today, under the Charter, the maximum for this class, including bonus, is £360 in the provinces and £390 in London—equivalent to increases of 64 and 42 per cent respectively. The provincial increase looks substantial. But the figure of £220 on which it is based was generally agreed to be much too low, actually and in comparison with other employments, before the war. Our aim then was a General Division maximum of £300. The present figure, with bonus, is only 20 per cent above that.

Current maximum salaries for civil servants (Treasury class) and certificated assistant teachers are £428 and £525 respectively—with a London weighting of £48 for the teachers. Bank officers, after agreeing to consolidate their bonus—a folly wisely avoided by NALGO—have asked for and, in the main, obtained an average maximum of £480 at 32, plus weightings of £30 for Inner London and £15 for Outer London and provincial towns of over 50,000 population. Some insurance company provincial staffs have obtained maxima for the lowest grade—equivalent to our General Division—of £500 to £510 at 36, with weighting of £25 for London.

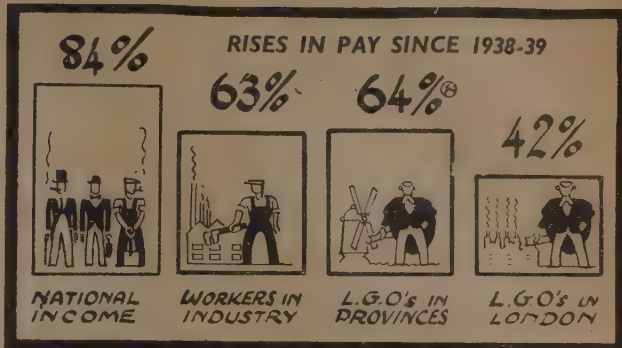
What conclusions can we draw from the above? I suggest four:

(1) The Ministry of Labour cost-of-living index is out of date, inaccurate, misleading, and should be revised.

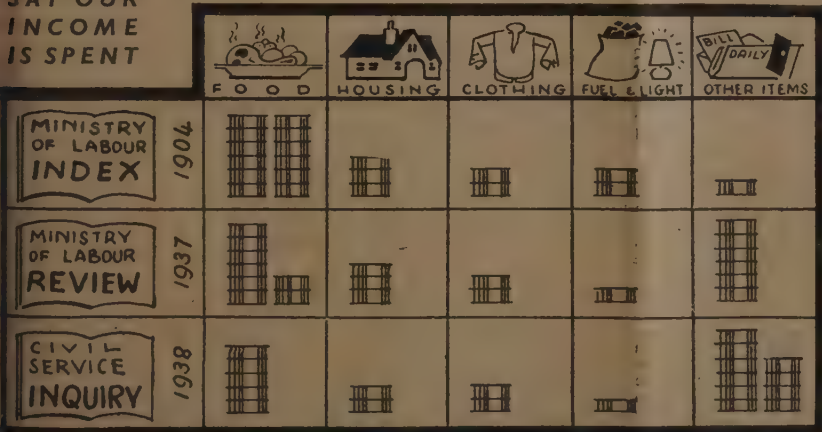
(2) The National Scales represent a good step forward in the Provinces—but not as much as the increase in the national income would justify or the growing strength and prestige of NALGO would lead one to expect.

(3) For Londoners, the scales are much too low, and weighting should be increased.

(4) Generally, notwithstanding the benefits of the Charter, the local government officer is still underpaid in relation to those in comparable professions—a fact which must have serious repercussions on the Service now and in the future.



HOW THEY SAY OUR INCOME IS SPENT



Each symbol represents 5 per cent of the family's income.

Undoubtedly the Charter is a fundamental step forward, and a turning point in NALGO's history. But it is intended, in the words of the National Joint Council, "to enable employing authorities to deal with their staffs on a basis intended to mark the local government service as offering a career likely to attract entrants of the type required to meet the future needs of local government." I doubt whether it will achieve that aim with its present scales, weighting, and bonus, and I call upon the N.E.C. to take early action to secure the further improvements needed.

West Ham Branch.

F. NEWMAN

MORE CHARTER GROUSES

Unequal Grading

WHILST the Charter has been welcomed as a great step forward, many local authorities are applying to officers the new grade which most nearly corresponds to their former salary or grade. In addition, there is often a "favoured department" in which the staff remain on higher grades after the adoption of the Charter than equivalent staff in less favoured departments. Similarly, there are officers who, because their salaries were higher (or lower) before adoption of the Charter (for a variety of reasons—longer service; prejudice of chief officers; absence for war service, etc.) have been placed higher (or lower) in the new grades than officers holding equivalent posts under the same authority.

In these cases, the appeals machinery is likely to be ineffective unless the National Joint Council can establish the principle of equivalent grading for comparable posts.

"HOPEFUL."

We all want equitable grading—but nobody has yet suggested a shorter cut to it. "Hopeful" should not be so hopeless about the provincial council machinery.

Chief's Advice Neglected

MOST complaints of grading appeals hitherto have alleged victimisation by chief officers. Here is a new angle. Several members in my department appealed against their grading. All appeals were strongly supported by the chief officer, but were not supported by the staff side of the local Whitley committee—and consequently failed, although the chief officer attended the committee meeting, to give personal backing.

The chief officer is surely better able to assess the value of his own staff than are staff representatives on the Whitley committee, who are probably members of other departments, and I consider that, where he supports an appeal, the staff representatives should support also.

"NEW ANGLE."

General Division After 20 Years!

THE revelation in the letter from H. Simpson, in the October journal, that some officers at Sheffield have been graded in the General Division after 20 years' service is not encouraging to staffs of other authorities still awaiting their fate! Instead of telling us of NALGO's hope to get the holidays anomaly adjusted, you would have done better to have advocated proper grading for officers with such long service—and the proper holiday allowance would then follow.

"WEST MIDLANDER."

Transport Inspectors' Grades

THE wide divergence of conditions of service and scales of salaries prevailing between even adjacent authorities has led my committee to seek contacts with other transport inspectors, with a view to forming a unified policy when the Charter gradings are announced. If any of your readers would care to collaborate with us, I shall be happy to exchange ideas with them on this or other matters of mutual interest.

41, Brentnord Road,
New Moston,
Manchester, 10.

J. H. MADEN,
Hon. Sec. M.C.T.D.

Salary at 21 Too Low

THE wage-for-age scales in the General Division mean, in effect, that a man entering local government at 30 (as many have done recently) with no experience, and doing simple clerical work, will receive £140 a year more than a man of 21 with possibly 3-4 years'

experience, and doing work which reflects that experience. Even the pre-Charter grading schemes showed an appreciation of the value of experience, although the scales were abysmally low.

In addition, the scale salary at 21 is totally inadequate. At this age, a man has the vote, assumes full legal status, and for three years will have been eligible to assist in protecting, with his life if need be, this local government system of ours. He cannot support himself adequately, let alone take on the cost of study or marriage, on a wage amounting, after deductions, to roughly £3 10s. a week.

An early revocation of the wage-for-age scales beyond the age of 21, plus the introduction of a

READERS' FORUM

A prize of half-a-guinea will be paid to the sender of what, in the Editor's opinion, is the best letter on a subject of general interest to members published each month. But letters must be kept short—despite drastic condensation, many have been held over this month. Pseudonyms are allowed—but letters not accompanied by the sender's name and address will not be published. Letters for the December journal must reach the Editor at 24, Abingdon Street, London S.W.1, by Friday, November 15.

minimum wage in the region of £4 10s. a week after deductions, and the grading of clerical posts by local negotiations, stand out as urgent necessities.

85, Richmond Street Brighton 7. F. J. B. TAYLOR.

The staff side tried to get a higher salary at 21—but the employers refused. Relatively few enter the service at 30—and if they were paid less, those of 21 would not necessarily be paid more. We have had local negotiations in the past—and it was partly because of experience of them that NALGO sought national standards.

Radiographers' Holiday Claim

BEFORE the institution of the Charter, hospital masseuses and radiographers were always granted one month's holiday a year and usually took at least a rota of public and bank holidays. Now, under the Charter, junior staff are apparently to get only two weeks' annual leave, and senior staff three weeks'.

In the case of radiographers, this is directly contrary to the international safety recommendations for X-ray and radium workers, which specify at least one month's annual leave, preferably all at one time. The same recommendations specify a maximum week of 35 hours against the 38 in the Charter.

The Charter was negotiated without consultation with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists and the Society of Radiographers, which, in conjunction with other professional bodies, recently negotiated a Charter suited to the conditions of work of their members.

D. M. E. PHILLIPS,
242, Upper Shoreham Rd., C.S.P., M.S.R.
Shoreham.

During the Charter negotiations neither of these societies made any approach to NALGO. Many professional societies were consulted—but had every section been approached, there would have been no Charter this year.

Examination Bar

IN reply to "S.E.'s" complaint in the October journal that older officers have not been encouraged to study for examinations, I would say that the opportunity has been available to them for years, had they wished to take it. After serving in France during the whole of the 1914-18 war, I could not obtain even unpaid council employment for nearly two years—but I did not wait for council assistance to qualify. Apart from full-time courses, there have been evening and correspondence courses since 1912. For the unqualified to expect parity with those who have studied, striven, sacrificed, and sweated to obtain their qualifications is absurd. God helps those who help themselves.

"MONS STAR."

Ex-Warriors' Study Fees Paid

IF "S.E." who complains that he cannot afford £25 to take the NALGO Intermediate, will approach the London Appointments Office of the Ministry of Labour, Tavistock Square, he will probably find, if he is an ex-serviceman, that they will pay the fees for him. I am studying for the I.M.T.A. and the Appoint-

ments Office are paying my study fees, entrance examination fees, and £5 towards the cost of text books.

Middlesex C.C.

S. V. BAKER.

PROMOTION EXAMINATION

"Copy 'Woshy' System"

I AGREE with Mr. Newman's suggestion, in his article in the October journal, that new methods are needed to select the sound administrator, and I suggest that the new Examination Board might copy the system in use in the Army for the selection of commissioned ranks. The War Office Selection Boards worked successfully. I understand, to within a margin of error of one three per cent.

A similar local government board, knowing the characteristics, ability, and temperament of a sound administrator, could subject the candidate to practical tests, an oral examination by an expert, and a short written examination. The results, I am sure, would be fairer than the present out-of-date examination system.

Tynemouth.

S. M. EDWARDSON.

Merits of Specialisation

MR. NEWMAN has overstated his case. To criticise the administrator who is also an expert in one of the professions, and to advocate by implication, that the chief administrative posts should be given to those who are experienced "only in administration," is surely to advance backwards, away from the ideal of "a broad and constructive outlook." Heaven preserve us from the administrator whose knowledge is confined to administration!

Specialisation, with all its defects, does give extra powers of concentration and a clarity of vision without which the broad outlook will be myopic and futile. The components of administrative ability enumerated by Mr. Newman are useless while latent; they must be developed by training. The young lawyer in the courts, the houseman at the operating table, the engineer erecting a structure on a poor subsoil, all undertake responsibilities and make critical decisions which do not fall to the lot of the industrious routine-bound clerk—and it is this responsibility which increases initiative, resource, adaptability, balanced judgment, and strength of character.

E. HANCOCK.

Keynsham and Bathavon Branch.

Back to Methuselah!

SUCH is the examination-ridden condition of modern life that soon, unless we can achieve Mr. Shaw's life force, taking us into our vigorous 300's, we shall find no time left to enjoy the fruit of our preparations. Already we have reached the point where technical qualifications are required to keep a stamp book. I am in favour of teaching children French and German if it opens their minds to other literature and other ideas, but fail to see the connection between their ability to matriculate in these subjects and their qualification for a junior clerical post in some local authority.

Mr. Newman's suggestion that administrative posts be filled by selection boards is good, provided the selectors know the qualities they want and are not too easily swayed by eyewash. Education must teach its own limitations if we are to use the examination system intelligently.

Battersea Branch.

J. E. WEBB.

THE TEMPORARIES' CASE

"Equal Pay" Claim

WHILE I believe that all temporary officers approve the ruling of the National Whitley Council that "no temporaries should be retained to the detriment of permanent staff on or returning from war service," I suggest that it is to the interest of "ex-warriors" and permanent officers generally that we "temps" should receive Charter salaries as soon as possible. Once this is achieved, allegations that local authorities prefer "cheap labour" will be answered. Rightly or wrongly, temporary officers expected Charter re-grading where applicable, and "Equal pay for equal work" is not unknown to NALGO, so please N.E.C., have regard to the case of your "temporary" members.

There is another important question—our future. We know that local authorities need increased staffs, and some of us would like the chance of such permanent posts as may be created or become vacant. Many have held responsible positions during the war, and, while we deserve and expect no special consideration for this, we feel entitled to ask our employers to decide as soon as possible which of us can be offered permanent

ost; and to inform the remainder how long their services are likely to be needed. The longer decisions are delayed, the more difficult will it be for us to return to our former vocations or to seek new fields.

"TEMPUS FUGIT."

Temporaries have not been overlooked. The National Joint Council has decided that they should get Charter service conditions at once, and that salaries should be increased before then. In fact, many are already getting Charter salaries.

A Raw Deal

NOTWITHSTANDING your promise, when the Charter was announced, of "good news" for the temporaries, all that they are to get, apparently, now that the crisis has passed, is liquidation. After inviting temporaries to join and collecting substantial subscriptions from them, NALGO retires and says nothing when the time comes to stand up for them. A recent circular declares that the salaries of temporaries are to be decided by their employers. If this is true, it means that NALGO has renounced one of its first duties to its members. The temporaries consider that they have had a raw deal.

A large proportion of these officers, who served also during the 1914-18 war, is now to be thrown to the discard for the second time—but now with their youth gone and the outlook bleak indeed. Yet many, with experience in commercial life, are an asset to local government. To discharge men who have proved themselves reliable and efficient just because they are no longer young is an axiomatic when young men are so urgently needed in industry. NALGO invited temporary officers to join the Association and we did so in the name of unity. But, in doing that, the Association also undertook responsibilities towards us. We are not unarmoured.

FORTITER IN RE.

Dead Men's Shoes

DURING grouse, as returning ex-servicemen, is not so much against "temps" as such, as against those officers, temporary and permanent, who took advantage of exemption from military service to secure for themselves better positions than they could have hoped for had there been no war.

The examination bar is a blow to those of us who thought our studying days were ended, but is not insuperable. The real blow is in the fact that, by the time we are qualified, it will be a case of "dead men's shoes," with the bulk of the potential corpses as unqualified men!

EX-SERGT.-MAJOR.

CLOSED-SHOP PERIL

A Threat to Liberty?

WHILE congratulating you on your timely article on the "closed-shop," I suggest that the decision of the London Passenger Transport Board has deeper implications than those you mention. It means, since the Board is a public corporation created by Act of Parliament, that the State is, in effect, granting a licence to one trade union and withholding it from another—and if trade unions are to exist only by the sanction of the State, then, as in Russia, they will have to dance to the tune called by the State.

The "closed-shop" policy between unionists and non-unionists is a limitation on the liberty of the employee, but between majority and minority unions it is an even greater limitation, denying the right of the employee to start a new union if he so wishes—and while a newly formed union may not survive, its possibility provides a safeguard against trade union bureaucracy.

I would like to see the N.E.C. come out boldly against the new "closed-shop" policy and give every possible assistance to its opponents, who are defending the personal freedom of every employee.

PHILIP RICKARD.

Surrey County Officers' Branch.

Should We Refuse "Conscripts"?

DOES the National Executive Council support the principle of compulsory trade union membership, or does it consider that the real strength and value of our organisation lies in its consisting entirely of members who have joined of their own free will? What would be the attitude of the Council to an officer who, declining to accept compulsory membership of a trade union as a condition of employment, resigned his membership of NALGO and, in consequence, was dismissed by his authority?

The great issue at stake here should be apparent to every local government officer. I suggest that, henceforth, all applicants for membership of NALGO should be required to state in writing whether their application is voluntary or whether they are joining as a result of direction by their employing authority—and where the latter reason is given, the application should be rejected. Such a move would add substantially to the considerable prestige which NALGO possesses and would be setting an example which the trade union movement as a whole could study with advantage.

H. W. MILLEN.

Treasurer and Accountant,
Hinckley U.D.C.

The policy approved by the NEC is set out on page 199.

"COMPANY" OFFICERS' NEED Equal Pay and Conditions

MAY I, as an employee of a "company" public utility undertaking (I cannot get used to calling myself an officer) express the great satisfaction many of us feel at being able to join NALGO? We have thought for some time that NALGO was the appropriate union for us, because we are in the main doing work similar to that done by local government officers. But, for the most part, we get nothing like the same pay, and we look to NALGO to put this right. That is our case in a nutshell—let us enjoy the same status and conditions of service as our local government colleagues.

The granting of such a status and such conditions will be not only an act of justice to ourselves, but also a guarantee to local government officers that their status will not be undermined by the presence in their own localities of "company" employees doing similar work for far inferior pay. There is a common interest between us which demands common action for the common object of equal pay.

288, Norwich Road,
Ipswich.

DOUGLAS DAY.

NALGO agrees—and will try to do for its "company" members what it has done for the local government officer.

NALGO WAR MEMORIAL

Convoluted Home "Not the Best"

WHEREAS I welcome and would gladly contribute to any memorial founded for our gallant comrades who gave their lives in the great struggle for freedom, I view with distaste and suspicion the purchase of a convoluted home for the purpose. Are we not sheltering behind the veil of benevolence and sympathy to obtain for our own advantage a house which will serve us and not those whom we should be, and are purporting to be, serving? If we must have this home, let us be open about it. Ask members to contribute for the purpose, but do not appeal for subscriptions in the name of our gallant dead.

Let us aim at collecting £40,000 for a war memorial, by all means, but, having obtained that money, let us credit it to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund and make every effort to ensure that whatever human aid is needed by the orphans and widows of our warrior comrades can be given unstintingly. Thus will we help the families of our heroes to live in comfort and pursue their own

ambitions—real living memorials to those of whom we are so justly proud.

Lochgelly, Fife. M. D. CARLAW.
Mr. Carlaw is too late—since Conference unanimously approved the War Memorial Scheme last June.

NALGO PROVIDENT SOCIETY "An Unfair Suggestion"

I HOPE that the Management Committee of the NALGO Provident Society will reject the Glasgow motion to reclassify or expel members who submit sickness claims at regular and frequent intervals. There must be others like myself who are able to work but with a chronic illness which may involve spells of sickness. We joined the Provident Society in A.I. health and the fact that we have since developed our disabilities is a risk which all sickness schemes should be prepared to meet. Most people manage to catch at least two colds each winter—and with chronic chest trouble this usually means for me at least two periods of sick leave. Does Glasgow think that this constitutes "regular and frequent" claims? If not, how does it suggest drawing the line? If this deplorable motion is adopted, the traditional Glaswegian meanness will cease to be a joke and become a blot on one of the finest sickness schemes in existence.

LONG-SERVICE OFFICERS

Why Not a Medal?

IN your last issue you reported the retirement of three members after serving the community for over 150 years. Why have not these officers been eligible for the Imperial Services Medal, which is awarded to civil servants of all grades who have served the requisite number of years? If the present government believes in fair play for all workers, let it right this wrong at once.

Tatsfield, Surrey. A. W. WATSON.

(Retired Member.)

Association Accounts

THE treasurer's review of NALGO finances at Conference dealt, succinctly, with many aspects of the Association's monetary policy, and clearly indicated certain weaknesses. Why are the accounts not published in the journal?

J. M. R.

The accounts are not published in the journal for the same reason that the annual report is not published there—the journal is not big enough. Any member may see them on application to his branch secretary or Conference delegate.

Local War Records Wanted

WILL you allow me to appeal through your columns for assistance from local government officers in forming our collection of local war records? We have already received through the courtesy of town clerks and others a number of printed records of the part played by municipalities in the last war, especially damage sustained by enemy action, but we feel sure that the compilers of many similar publications would be willing to deposit copies in our Library if this request were brought to their notice.

Imperial War Museum. H. FOSTER,
Librarian.

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In the South**“Too Much Concession and Compromise On Our Side”**

Says J. KYLE, Deputy County Clerk, Roxburghshire, and Secretary, Scottish Eastern Border Counties branch

HARRY RAE and SAM BRODIE would, I think, have been well advised to sing dumb on the Scottish Charter instead of rushing into print with excuses for the failure of the staffs' side to negotiate something more acceptable to Scottish members as a whole.

The former speaks of concessions and compromises: but a comparison of the Scottish Charter with its English counterpart leaves no doubt in my mind which side of the J.I.C. compromised and conceded. The latter, when he refers to every officer coming within the scope of the scheme, has conveniently forgotten the terms of clause 30 (a), which excludes those not required to possess the entrance qualification, such as messengers, outdoor collectors, and telephone operators. Then, when you consider how the staffs' side has knuckled down and you read Mr. Rae's references to the “cordial

say how the grouping was fixed—even provisionally? I defy anyone not having access to the “secret formula” to explain the method adopted. It was certainly not on the basis of population or rate produce. But the grouping is so full of anomalies and so unwarranted that it shows our representatives in a bad light and should be abolished at once. No one, I am sure, would deny Glasgow and Edinburgh a system of weighting, but for our representatives to ask some of us—not their own branch members, mark you!—to accept the reduced Scottish salary scales plus what is tantamount to the English cost of living bonus, is to ask too much!

Why should not a local authority reckon previous service with another authority for annual leave when it reckons such service for sick pay and superannuation?

Again, there are so many permissive clauses in the Charter that one gets the impression that it is, in fact, only a draft prepared by the employers' side and that we can still await the staffs' side revisions!

But the crowning insult to Scottish members is the operative date. Teachers, police above the rank of sergeant, and nurses, can have their up-graded salaries back-dated to keep them in

step with their English colleagues, but we, the poor administrators, must be more than six months behind our English confreres on account of dilly-dallying on the employers' side and shilly-shallying on our own.

Many other points cry out for explanation,



“I'll say we're understaffed”

but I declare my first innings closed and will watch with interest the efforts of my good friends, Rae and Brodie, batting on a sticky wicket.

More “Company” Officers Join the Association

The recruitment of officers of public utility companies—electricity, gas, and water—is making steady progress over a wide field. So far, officers of 43 companies have joined NALGO. Enrolments since the last list was published have been made by staff of the following companies:

Electricity—Aldrincham Electric Supply, Blandford Forum Electric Light, County of London Electric Supply, East Anglian Electricity Supply, Edmondson's Electricity Corporation (Newbury), Leicestershire and Warwickshire Electric Power, London Power, New Milton and Barton Electric Light, Midland Electric Light and Power, Northampton Electric Light and Power, North Somerset Electricity Supply, South Wales Electric Power, Wessex Electric.

Gas and Water—Barnet district Gas and Water, Brighton, Hove and Worthing Gas, Bromsgrove Gas, British Gas Light (Hull), East Hull Gas, Leamington Priors Gas, East Worcestershire Waterworks, Luton Water, Reading Gas, Shrewsbury Gas Light, Stroud District Water, Stroud Gas, Sutton and Cheam Water, Swenage Gas and Electric, Warwick Gas and Worcester Gas.

atmosphere now created” and Mr. Brodie's statement that “good will exists”—it makes you think!

Is it not a serious reflection on the efficiency of both councils and officers for the employers' side to hold, and the staffs' side to agree, that the employee's ability to carry out his duties cannot be ascertained in anything less than twelve months and that a probationary period of that duration is therefore necessary?

The system of grouping should have been condemned as unfit for human consumption. Can Mr. Rae or Mr. Brodie explain why administrative staffs should be grouped when police, teachers, and nurses, have national scales? Or can they

(Continued in next column)

Branch Work For Needy

RECENT windfalls of £21 each have been received by the Benevolent Fund from Merthyr Tydfil and Nottinghamshire. Both were balances from Forces comforts funds. Another, of £4 8s., came from Stourbridge, in recognition of NALGO's achievement in securing the Charter.

Dances, as usual yielding a good harvest, have produced at: West Cornwall, £42 7s.; Featherstone, £30 12s.; Oldham, £25; Brierley Hill, £16 18s.; and Gillingham, £13 7s.

Other contributions were received from: Gloucester, £65 10s. (ball, competition, and donation); P.L.A., £50 (donation); Bromley, £24 1s. (competition, flower sale, and draw); Ruislip-Northwood, £16 12s. (thanksgiving appeal, sweepstake, and whist drive); Southwark, £7 7s. (draw); and Droydsden & Audenshaw, £3 16s. (penny-a-week collection).

In the North**“Arm Our Negotiators With More Facts and Figures”**

Says WILLIAM BREMNER, Secretary, Caithness branch

WHILE all in the North of Scotland are pleased that a Charter has come into existence at all, we are not so pleased when we realise the implications of the egregious grouping system.

Groups I and III are the sheep and the goats. They are kept from mixing by the kindly offices of the debatable Group II. The fortunate burghs, cities, and counties, are carefully listed by name, but the third-class passengers are naively described as “all other local authorities.” These are the orphans of the storm, the also-rans, the Cinderellas of Scottish local government—and they include the whole northern area of Scotland.

But to be cynical and cheap is not to be helpful, and our criticism of the Charter does not necessarily imply a lack of confidence in our representatives on the J.I.C. I observe that the Eastern Counties branch, in a circular to branches, takes the short-sighted view that our representatives are the niggers in the wood-pile, declaring that lower group officers “have been very badly let down” by them. The suggestion here is that we can better the Charter by the simple process of changing our negotiators, that we can cross the river quicker if we change horses in mid-stream, and that our best policy is to dismiss those with experience in favour of a few valiant novices.

Would it not be wiser to furnish our present representatives with more facts and figures, and thus arm them with stronger bargaining counters? For instance, it is taken for granted that the North of Scotland cannot rise to Group I because of sheer inability to pay its scales. True, its rateable valuation is low, but only because that valuation bears so little relation to the real one. Farmers and crofters pay rates on only one-eighth of their rentals. This applies to agriculture generally, but in the north it shows itself in an aggravated form owing to special local conditions. I belong to the agricultural community myself, but I am not a traitor to my class when I say that northern agriculture is faring well and can easily shoulder a normal rating burden. The matter is, of course, one for legislative interference, by way either of amending the rating system or of making equalisation grants.

Then, it has been asserted that an officer in the north can live cheaply. Is it realised that in

certain northern districts a ton of coal costs 90s. and a unit of electricity 3s. 8d., and that bus fares are often double those in the south? I agree that funeral costs are comparatively low in the north, but since longevity is a local characteristic we are forced to conclude that even in the economics of the grave, Destiny has thrown in a handicap!

Colin Roberts Retires

COLIN ROBERTS, one of the best known and best loved personalities in NALGO, retired from the local government service at the end of September, after a career of 47 years in poor law and local government.

Entering the public assistance service at the bottom of the ladder in 1899 at Stoke-on-Trent, he served at South Shields, Stockport, Pembroke, and Canterbury before becoming, in 1915, master of Walton Institution, Liverpool, and, in 1929, when the institution became the biggest municipal hospital in Britain, its lay manager—the only appointment of its kind in the country. He shared the appointment with his wife, who was matron of the hospital—a life partnership of unique public value and private happiness.

In trade union affairs, his record has been no less inspiring. Joining the Poor Law Officers' Association in 1901, he became its president in 1925, and in 1930 played a leading part in its merger with NALGO. Since then, he has been a prominent member of the N.E.C., first as chairman of the education committee, then as vice-president—in which capacity he presided over the 1942 and 1943 Conferences—and, in 1944 as president. He was president of the Liverpool branch in 1945 and 1946.

Equally outstanding was his work for nurses as chairman, since 1941, of the nurses' panel of the Rushcliffe Committee—for which he was, in 1944, awarded the O.B.E.

Colin Roberts' geniality, generosity, acumen, and wide knowledge of affairs have won for him a lasting place in the memories of many NALGO members, and all will wish him health and happiness in the retirement so well earned.

E. L. R.

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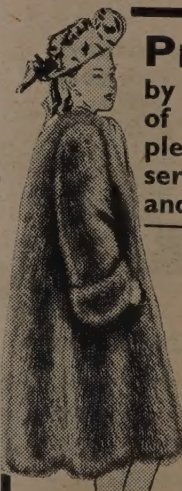
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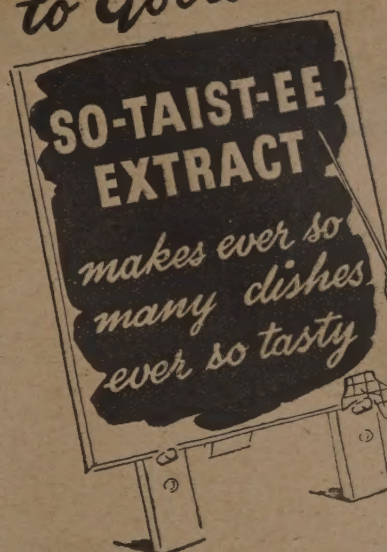
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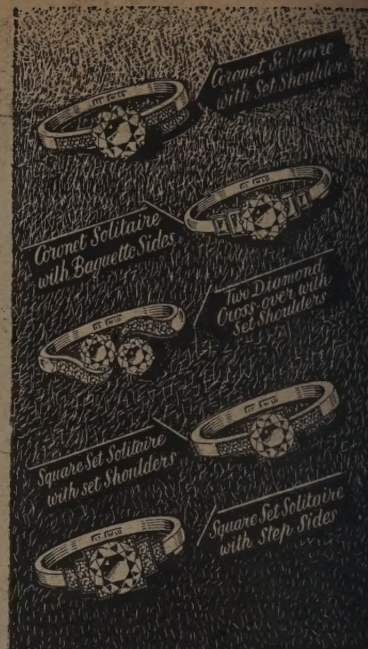
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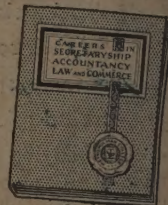
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